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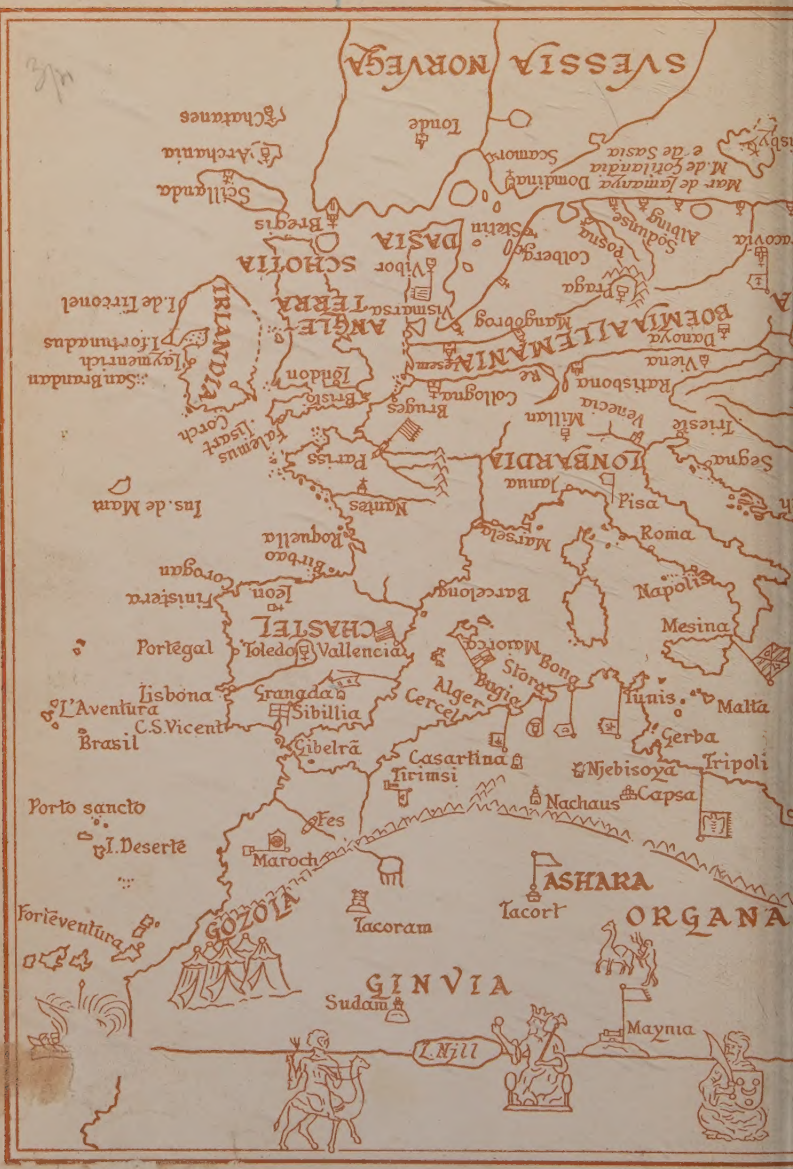
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1485 to 1600

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BOOK IV

1485 to 1600

BY

N. NIEMEYER AND P. WRAGGE

From the Louterell Psalter.

"A faire felde ful of folke fonde I there bytwene
Of alle maner of men, the mene and the riche,
Werchyng and wandryng, as the worlde asketh."

The Vision of Piers Plowman

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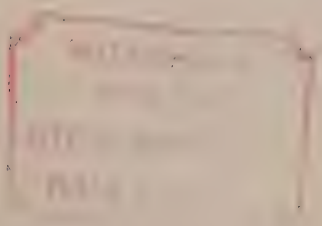

PREFACE

THESE books have been written in order to depict, for the young of whatever age, some of the conditions and changes which have marked the lives of ordinary folk in past times. They trace, very simply, through the centuries, the development of England on its social side; they deal with the ways in which people lived, earned their daily bread, traded, worshipped God, travelled, amused themselves, or endured the ups and downs of life. The national story in its main outlines has been well and often told; therefore the writers of this series have assumed that their readers have at hand one of the general political accounts. The present series is in any case intended merely as an introduction to a great subject, which, when studied more fully, touches at many points literature, art, music, handicraft, the dance, the drama and other human activities. The lists of works for additional reading are therefore not to be neglected.

Social history is important, not merely because it gives the background for the great events of the past, but also because it enables us to understand, in some measure, the motives which have swayed or led great masses of plain men. Political movements, in fact, often arise out of social conditions, while great political changes are important because of their influence on everyday human life. The two aspects of history, therefore, the social and the political, ought not to be studied entirely apart. They explain each other.

A famous old schoolbook, translated into English in 1651, gives the following advice to the writers of history books :—

"When matters atchieved are related, this is a storie; when things feigned are told, it is a tale. *Those* let an historian rehears; but to record *these* in chronicles, let him account it a moral offens. And that it may bee manifest that they are the verie things themselves, not forged devices foisted in, let him set down in his commentaries all the matter, together with the circumstances when, how, where, etc."

These principles the writers in this series have endeavoured to honour.

The writers of this part wish to thank the President and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, for leave to reproduce the Plan of Heyford, and the Librarian of the Bodleian Library, for leave to reproduce the portrait of Lancelot Andrewes.

E. H. S.

Bingley Training College,
Yorkshire.

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PIERS PLOWMAN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORIES

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

THE NEW SPIRIT

At the opening of the sixteenth century, England was known to Continental nations as an island set in dangerous seas, an island long famous for its wool, and, more recently, for its rough, homely cloth. For many years after 1500, little happened to alter this view of England. Englishmen busied themselves with their sheep and their wool, and their weaving of cloth, with their carting to market and shipping across the narrow seas. The great forces which moulded the changes of the sixteenth century came not so much from Englishmen as from foreigners. From the mid-fifteenth century onwards foreigners had been achieving more wonderful things year by year. Only gradually did news of strange discoveries and doctrines reach English minds. It was not until late in the sixteenth century that the English nation was swept into the new life of the world, not until then that Drake set sail, and Shakespeare wrote.

The nations whose discoveries created the changes were Portugal, Spain, Germany, and Italy. Very gradually, through the fifteenth century, Portugal had been extending the limits

of the known world. About 1400 the most learned men in Northern Europe knew only a little of the world (see the map at the beginning of the book). The shores of the North Sea, of the Baltic, of the Channel, of the Atlantic, and of the Mediterranean Basin were fairly well known. Venetians and Genoese sailed the Black Sea. But beyond Alexandria, beyond Damascus, lay countries of magic, lands of which very little indeed was known, out of which caravans brought treasures and curiosities from vast distances. The Portuguese were the first who penetrated into the unknown. In 1415, the year of the battle of Agincourt, the Portuguese won from the Moors the white-walled port of Ceuta, on the African shore opposite Gibraltar. Young Prince Henry of Portugal distinguished himself during the capture, and was knighted next day. Ceuta became a starting-point for the expeditions of Portuguese sailors, and Prince Henry became known as "the Navigator," because he organised so many expeditions. Year by year, Portuguese ships sailed southwards along the West African coast, and brought back a little gold dust, some ivory, some skins of strange beasts. Further and further they went, until in 1487, Bartholomew Diaz saw the shore trending to the east; he followed it for some hundreds of miles, and then, to his amazement, found it retreating north. In 1497 Vasco de Gama passed beyond Diaz' furthest point. He sailed northwards up to Mozambique, whence natives piloted him across the Indian Ocean to Calicut, south of Madras. In that brilliant, sunny harbour, his ship lay side by side with Chinese junks, with sails made of matting; on shore, white-robed merchants from Cairo and Acre dealt with Hindus and even with Chinamen, exchanging Syrian cedar wood and European cloth against Indian spices, jewels, silks, and cottons. Among the strange dark faces and white robes came the sunburnt Portuguese, sweating in their hot sombre doublets and hsoe. They

made themselves understood, and managed to trade, and to trade busily. Their trade grew continuously. One reason was that they monopolised it. In 1493 the Pope awarded to Portugal the monopoly of "the African voyage," as the route to India was called. To the Spaniards he awarded the monopoly of the new "westward voyage" (see below); and the two nations fixed the dividing line thirty-seven leagues out to sea west-wards from the Cape Verde Islands.* Thereafter for more than a generation, men thought of the "African voyage" as the most important piece of sailing in the world, and of the Portuguese King as the richest Prince in the world, because of his Indian "Spiceries." It was to Portuguese merchants now, far more than to the merchants of Syria and Constantinople, that Indians and Chinese sold their rich bales. Syrian merchants and ports became poor. Venice had been the main European port whither came Eastern goods from Syria.† But her greatness now declined. Portuguese ships beat round Cape Tempestuous ‡ bearing Oriental cargoes to ports in Portugal. Most of the trade between India and the Northern European countries now passed this way.

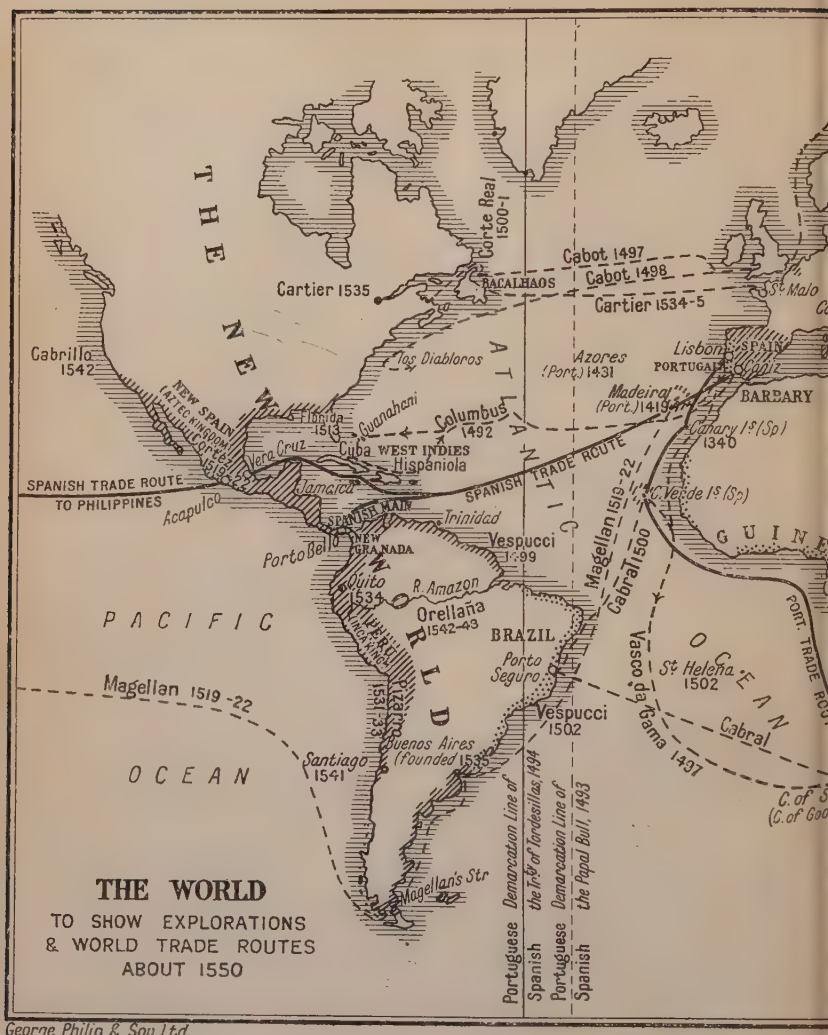
Three great results followed. First, little Portuguese ports became what the Syrian harbours had been—the markets of East and West. The coast of Portugal, however, was out of the way. All the organised traders of Europe, the Hansa men, the English Staplers, and the Italian merchants, had their depôts in the Netherlands. Consequently, in 1516, the King of Portugal ordered his merchants to go to Antwerp, and to sell their Oriental goods to all comers there.§ Secondly, Oriental goods became far commoner in Europe

* *See Map* 2.

† *See Bk. III. Chap. VI.*

‡ *Diaz named the Cape "Cape Tempestuous"; but, on his return, the King of Portugal changed the name to the "Cape of Good Hope."*

§ *See Chap. VIII.*



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MAP 2.—Map of the WORLD to show EXPLORATIONS

The London Geographical Institute

and ROUTES of WORLD TRADE about 1550.

than they had been. Thirdly, people in Western Europe began to be interested, strongly, in the strange tribes of Africa, and the stranger civilisations of India and China. We can see this interest in the pictures and books of travel, which men began to publish, and to buy.

It was to this new mental outlook, rather than to commercial expansion, that Spain contributed at first. Spanish sailors began to make the "African voyage." But after 1493 they were forbidden by the Papal award to do so. However, long before this time Spanish sailors had heard vague old stories, that there were "Antillia," or "Western Islands," far out in the Atlantic. So they had sailed out into the ocean, and zigzagged about, hoping to find islands as rich as India. They called voyages in this direction "the Westwards voyage." There was a second reason for undertaking a voyage westward. Although most men still believed that the world was flat and rimmed like a saucer, yet a very few learned men and a few navigators were beginning to think it might be a globe. They thought that, if this were so, there was nothing but water on the round world between the shore of Portugal and the shore of Asia. Christopher Columbus believed this. He thought that if he sailed westwards and westwards, without zigzagging, he would reach the coast of Asia at last. In August, 1492, he sailed away westward, with a crew who probably believed in the flatness of the earth. By the second week in October no land had been seen. The men must have thought they were near the edge of the world. They were on the very verge of mutiny and murder. In the night of October 10 they saw a little light, too low to be a star; at daylight on October 11 they could see, six miles away, a dim streak of land.

Then followed the discovery of the Islands of Cuba and Hispaniola. These islands were hardly profitable at all.

They yielded very few spices, very little gold indeed, little but humble products, cotton, tobacco, maize, woods. They did not bring great wealth to Spain. But in the first generation of discovery, Spanish sailors sailed along the whole eastern coast of South America. In 1521 Magellan entered the Pacific, and reached the seaboard at the foot of the Andes, mountains rich with gold and silver. After 1522 came the discoveries of Peru and Mexico, with their gold. The treasure galleons began to sail. So the barren possessions of Spain changed into a treasury richer than Portugal owned in her trade with India. Such a sudden expansion of the world revolutionised men's ideas.

The great discovery made by Germany was of quite a different sort. It was the invention of a machine ; it was the making of the Printing Press. And it, too, revolutionised men's thoughts.

A mediæval book had been written by the hand either of a monk * or of a professional "scrivener" or copyist. In the fifteenth century in France and in Germany and the Low Countries, men had found a new method of making "books." A craftsman took a slab of wood, and drew upon it a very simple picture, and a text, to explain it (see Fig. 1). He cut out all the background with his chisels, both broad and fine. Then he inked the upstanding pieces of wood, laid a piece of paper upon it, and rubbed an imprint off. Two such sheets were pasted together. Even forty or fifty such sheets were put together to make a "book." "Books" like this were dear, but cheaper than hand-written books. Then men saw that if any one could invent a way by which a new block need not be cut for every page of print, it would be well, because then the same letter forms could be used again

* *See Book III. Chap. VIII.*

and again, instead of cutting out each word, nay, each page, as a fixed whole.

Perhaps the actual name of the first printer will never be known. A man named Gutenberg, working at Mainz, was one of the very earliest. We know a little about his

FIG. 1.—A page from a Block Book. This page illustrates part of the life of St. John the Divine. The letters at the top stand for the words "Domitianus Johannen deorum-virorum contemporem in Pattimos insula exulo (mittit)." They mean "Domitian sends John, who despised the men-gods, into exile at the Isle of Patmos." The Emperor wears the crown and carries the sceptre. The little figure seems to be asking for mercy for St. John. The tall figure behind St. John, with horns, and a fork in his hand, is the Devil. This page was the fourth page of a block book of fifty leaves, made somewhere in the Low Countries in the fifteenth century, Three copies taken from these blocks still exist.

methods. He concentrated his work upon splitting up the words into single letters. His main idea was to make an image of each single letter, which could be used over and over again. To do this, he first prepared twenty-six wooden "punches." A punch was a tiny little cube of wood, mounted in a handle. On the flat end of each cube the outline of one letter was

drawn ; Gutenberg copied his letters from the best handwriting he knew. Then with a very fine chisel he carved away the wood around the letter. Next, he made small hollow iron dice, and

Fig. 2.—Casting Type (from a book published in Germany in 1558). The man is pouring metal which he has melted on his little furnace out of a ladle into the mould. When it is cool, he will drop it into the bowl beside him, in which many other stamps are already lying. His wood, tongs, and bellows are handy. Above, on the shelf, are other moulds. Below the original picture is written

> "I make the type for printing in,
> Of bismuth, and of lead, and tin."

filled each one with molten lead. With a punch he stamped smartly upon the soft lead in one of the dice, and so left the reverse impression of the letter in it. When the lead had cooled and hardened, he poured in molten metal, and so made

as many images of each letter as he wished. These metal letter-shapes are called "type." But the first type were not perfect. The letters often had ragged edges, because the wooden punch had stuck in the lead, or because it had not been pressed firmly enough into the lead. So Gutenberg had punches made of steel, and filled his little dice with copper instead of lead; then the letters came out clear and bold. Thus he made or "cast the type." Exactly how he used it we cannot say, for little is known about his printing press.

In 1455, Gutenberg and his partner, Fust, printed a fine Bible. But later, they broke up their workshop, and discharged their workmen. This dispersal speeded the printers out into the great European cities. One went to Bamberg, one to Cologne, one to Strasburg, one to Basle, one, in 1470, to Paris, two or three to Italy. In each city the people were interested in the new craft; but sometimes the copyists of the town became open enemies to the printer, who was attacking their livelihood.

Until the later years of Henry VIII., England's share in the discoveries of this glorious time was not a large one. Apart from the voyages of Sebastian Cabot, and a few short, unsuccessful voyages made by Bristol men, English sailors were commercial upon the whole. They sailed to Iceland for cod, and to Rochelle and Bordeaux for wine, and they carried English wool and English cloth to Middlesburg and Antwerp. But by the time of Henry VIII.'s accession, English people were beginning to be interested in the strange tales of discovery which foreign sailors were telling in ports overseas. In 1511–12, a Dutchman caused an account of America to be written in English. He thought such a book

might be sold profitably in England. Then, for the first time, people could read in English an account of a voyage to the New World.

"We sailed out of Portugal 900 miles, and at the last went on land. That land is named Armenica. There we saw many wonders of beasts and fowls. The folk live like Beasts, without any reasonableness, they eat also one another. The man eteth his wife and children. They live commonly 300 years or more, for of sickness they die not."

The Dutchman had employed some man who merely collected traveller's tales. In 1555 the travels of Amerigo Vespucci * were translated into English. He wrote—

"Jumping on shore, we found men's huts, where they had made large fires. They were roasting a certain animal like a serpent † but without wings. They had many of these serpents alive, fastened by the feet. They looked so fierce that none of us dared approach them, thinking them poisonous. They are as big round as a kid, with long thick feet, armed with claws. The skin is hard, . . . the mouth and face like those of a serpent, with a crest like a saw from the nose to the tip of the tail."

Such stories entertained English people very much. Yet even at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. very few English sailors could speak of America out of their own experience.

But, as to printing, it was not only an Englishman who brought the press to England, but it was that same Englishman who made improvements upon the foreign models. This man was William Caxton. He was a wool stapler,‡ but before 1470 he gave up business for a post in the household of the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV. of England. Caxton loved literature, old and new. He translated a French romance, "The Collection of Stories of Troy," into English, and his translation was so much enjoyed by English gentlemen

* *Vespucci was a skilful pilot, whose four voyages are now considered important owing to the amount of coast line traced. He is famous because the great continents of N. and S. America were named after him. His "Travels" were translated into Dutch in* 1506–10, *and into French in* 1510.

† *This animal is the iguana. It is quite harmless.*

‡ *See Book III. Chap. VI.*

of the Court, that he was wearied out with writing it and copying and recopying it. A printing press was at work in Cologne, and Caxton decided to learn the new craft. Possibly he went to Cologne first. In 1473 he was in Bruges, working with a master printer. At Bruges he printed the "Stories of Troye," and another translation from French, "Ye Game and Playe of Ye Chesse."

By 1477 Caxton had returned to England, bringing a staff of foreign workmen with him. He hired a house from the monks of Westminster, which stood among others just outside the great gate of the monastery. The sign of the Red Pale, a shield with a red band running from top to bottom, hung out in front. Here the press or presses were set up. How many workmen Caxton had is unknown; only two are known by name, Wynkyn de Worde, a Lorrainer, and Richard Pinson, a Norman. Caxton's apparatus must have consisted of the implements required for moulding type, the type itself and its belongings, and the press. Nothing is known of his type-making except from the evidence of his books. The room used for making it must have had in it a forge for melting the metals needed. A skilled artificer, almost an artist, must have been in charge of the designing of the letters. The type-maker had an iron pot for melting copper with which to fill up the iron dice. He needed the hollow iron dice themselves, punches, a ladle for molten metal, a ruler and square to measure the straightness of each letter and a plane for levelling the rough backs of the type. Three processes went on: first the making of the moulds, and the second the making of the punches; these were done probably in Gutenberg's manner described above. The third process was the making of the type itself. It was made by hand. Each workman poured his molten metal into his letter moulds, pulled out the metal letter when it had cooled, smoothed the upper end, and tested it with rule

and square (see Fig. 2). Then pieces of metal to fill spaces between words must be cast, to prevent the words from tumbling together. Iron dice were cast of the same size as the type, but lacking the forward standing letter. The only stops used were colons, and commas, long strokes as high as a letter. The room in Caxton's house, with roaring furnace, and besmutted workmen ejaculating in Flemish or Norman, must have impressed English visitors curiously. The rest of the printing may have been done in one large room. The "compositor," or workman who set up the type, stood at a large desk, probably furnished with drawers at the side. To the right of him hung the MS. sheet which he was to copy, perhaps page 1. His neighbour did page 2. Pages 3 and 4 were given to the workmen on the other side of the room. Each man had only type sufficient for a single page.

Before each compositor lay a large shallow tray, called a "coffin," the size of two pages of the future book. The compositor picked his letters and spaces out of the drawer at his side, and filled up the coffin. Then he drove in strips of wood at the sides and foot, and tightened the coffin with screws. This should have held the type fast. But often the "spaces" fell forward, and marked the page when it was printed; often, too, the type shifted unevenly, so that the margin of the print was crooked. To remedy this Caxton used a new device in 1480. Instead of allowing his men to fill a whole "coffin" at once, he gave each one several long narrow troughs * each made to hold one line, to be filled with type, and then laid one above the other in the coffin. Thus the type had less room to shift, and the margins became more even.

The workman carried the "coffin," when filled, to one of the presses. The press stood rather higher than a man. The

* *Since called composing sticks.*

construction can be seen from the drawing (Fig. 3). It was made wholly of wood. Two men were in charge of each press.

Fig. 3.—An Early Printing Press. (From W. Blades' "Caxton.") This drawing is the earliest existing drawing of a Printing Press. It was published in 1511, by a celebrated printer of Amsterdam, Jacobus Ascensius, whose name is written across the press. The man standing behind has his two ink dabbers in hand, ready to ink over the type. The other workman is unscrewing the press, and rolling out the shallow drawer, to receive the tray of type. The "compositor" holds the grooved composing stick, into which he is putting the type. The stick should be in his left hand. The copy is stuck up in front of him on a cleft stick. Such were the very early presses, which only printed one page at a time. Before the end of Caxton's life, two pages were printed at once.

The first took the coffin and laid it on a table. Then, having poured ink upon a sheepskin "dabber" stuffed with wool,

he inked the type over. For a fresh bottle of ink, he had only to send into another room, where it was made. He turned the lower handle of the press, and a shallow stone trough slid out, in which he put the coffin,* and laid on it a piece of paper ready folded by his helper. He turned the handle back, and the trough crawled back again. Then both men seized the upper handles of the press and strained them round and round. When the screw had been re-turned, the trough slidden forward, and the paper removed, a fair print had been made on it. The leaf was taken to a scribe, who sat numbering each sheet at the bottom, so that the binder should put it in the right order. The binder took the sheets, unrevised and uncorrected, to his room, laid two or three blank sheets where we should put a title-page, and bound them altogether as the book.

Caxton went on printing until 1494, when he died, and then his man Pinson carried on the business. Englishmen were slow to learn to print. A certain Letton was printing in London, with William of Mechlin, in 1481. Some one unknown was printing in Oxford in 1478 ; in 1481 a printer from Cologne was at work there, and he was joined by an Englishman, T. Hunte, before 1485. Most interesting of all was a man who called himself " the Schoolmaster of St. Albans," who worked his press at St. Albans from 1480 to 1481. He printed some school books and some others.†

Thus Germany had provided the means of multiplying books. This invention would have been far less important

* *There were slight differences between different presses, as we can see from old pictures.*

† *See p. 71 for his " Boke of Huntyng."*

than it was, had it only been mediæval books that were printed and reprinted. It was Italy that gave birth to new interests and new beliefs ; it was Italians who re-discovered a very old literature, which caused men to create new books, full of new phrases and new thoughts.

Halfway through the fourteenth century, there lived in Italy a great poet, Petrarch, and a great writer of stories, Boccaccio, and the two were friends and read books together. They noticed that the older the book the purer and finer was the Latin. Hitherto no one had thought much about this. At last Petrarch and his friend read all they could of Cicero's writings,* and were filled with admiration for him, for all his sayings were clothed in language more apt than any man had uttered since he died. From Cicero other Italian students passed to other Roman writers. They found that their books were full of ideas that had been forgotten. They found, too, that the Romans had spoken of Greek writings of four centuries earlier as something far more wonderful and beautiful than anything of their own. In the time of Petrarch, Greek was almost entirely unknown in Italy. Indeed, it was known hardly anywhere but in Constantinople, where it had never been forgotten. From 1397 onwards teachers of Greek came from Constantinople to Italy. A famous teacher wrote a Greek grammar for Italians. In days when in England, under Richard II., the Lords were striving with the King, the townsmen of Florence were crowding to the lecture-room of a great and eloquent teacher of Greek.†

This devotion to Greek and Latin literature has lasted to our own day. In the fifteenth century Italian scholars

* *Cicero was born in B.C.* 106, *and died in B.C.* 43.

† *The revival of Greek stories does not date, as is so often asserted, from the fall of Constantinople in* 1453. *Italians had been reading Greek, and collecting Greek MSS. for fifty years and more before that date.*

and nobles were reading the books of the Greek philosopher Plato; some actually tried to live as he had thought best. For the Greeks had thought upon matters of the most lasting human interest: about the nature of man's soul and its connection with God, about the rules which should govern conduct, about the real character of beauty and pleasure. The Greeks had valued the life of this world as the essential part of a man's life. Mediæval thinkers, on the other hand, did not believe that conduct was important chiefly because of its immediate effects in this world. Rather they valued conduct as it might appear to God at the Day of Doom. For to them, that was the really important time and place. In the fifteenth century, after much reading of Greek and Latin books, many men began to hold that thinkers of their own days had been less wise than the Greeks. They began to think that they themselves could lay hold on new knowledge, and see new meanings in life, if they attended carefully to the doings of living men, and to history, and to science, and to the delightful beauty of the visible world.

Late in the fifteenth century a few Englishmen went to Italy to learn the Greek language. Towards the end of Henry VII.'s reign and in the early years of Henry VIII., men of two generations—Grocyn, Linacre, and Lilley—More, Colet, and Erasmus—brought Greek literature to the knowledge of cultivated Englishmen. Then many men followed Colet's example and founded schools, to teach young men pure, old Latin, and also Greek. Slowly and partially Greek words and thoughts filtered into the minds of the educated. Printed books came into all hands. New adventures spread their exciting influence wherever tongue could tell them.

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Breasted, J. H., and Robinson, J. H.	European History ..	*Ginn & Co.*
Sir T. More ..	Utopia	*Any Edition.*
Seebohm, F. ..	The Oxford Reformers ..	*J. M. Dent & Son (Everyman Series).*
Hakluyt, R. ..	Principal Navigations ..	*J. M. Dent & Son., or Horace Marshall & Co.*
Leach, A. F. ..	Schools of Mediæval England	*Methuen & Co.*
Duff, E. G. ..	Early Printed Books ..	*Kegan Paul & Co.*
Beazley, C. ..	Henry the Navigator ..	*(Heroes of the Nations Series.)*

CHAPTER II

HENRY VII. AND THE TUDOR PEACE

At his accession Henry VII. knew well that England needed one thing. This was the carrying out of the existing laws. Henry VI. had never secured this ; Edward IV. had obtained it only very partially. Soon after 1485 the Lord Chief Justice said to Henry VII. :—

> " The laws will never be executed until all the Lords are persuaded, for the love and dread which they have of God or of the King, or both, effectually to execute them ; and until the King on his part and the Lords on their part shall make each other do this, or, if they will not, they shall be chastised and punished."

Laws existed ; but men disobeyed them, and flouted the Judges. The King's duty it was to punish men who defied the law.

From olden days the King and his Council had called offenders before them, to punish them. But often now, when they were summoned, the offenders did not come. For instance, in 1467 a quarrel had arisen between Lord Strange and Roger Kinaston, a powerful country gentleman. Kinaston refused again and again to treat Lord Strange justly ; and then Lord Strange petitioned the King to call Kinaston before the Council, and judge between them. Twice the King's messenger was sent to Kinaston, but neither time did he even answer the King's letter. Then the King ordered the Sheriff of the Shire to proclaim that Kinaston must appear before him. It was done, but Kinaston did not come. Next, the King

commissioned certain gentlemen to arrest their accused neighbour. They took no steps. Perhaps some were friends of his, and others afraid of him. Then Lord Strange petitioned the Council to write to these gentlemen again. But as far as we know, Kinaston never came at all.

Men would not help to arrest such offenders, because people like Kinaston had many liveried followers * and many friends sworn to help them, even by violence, in the Law Courts.† Another reason was that in Edward IV.'s reign men were still afraid of making the King too strong.

Henry VII. was determined to have justice done, and to make the Lords dread the King. So he got Parliament to strengthen this particular part of the Council's work by special sanction. In 1487 it was enacted :

"The King our Sovereign Lord remembereth how by unlawful maintenances, and giving of Liveries, signs, and tokens, . . . by untrue demeanings of Sheriffs, in . . . making untrue returns, . . . by taking of money by juries, by great riots and unlawful assemblies, the policy and good rule of this realm is almost subdued, to the increase of murders, robberies, perjuries and unsuerties [insecurity] of all men living, and losses of their lands and goods. . . . Be it therefore ordained, that the Chancellor and Treasurer of England . . . and Keeper of the King's Privy Seal (or two of them) calling to them a Bishop and a lord of the King's most honorable Council, and the chief justices of the King's Bench and Common Pleas . . . (may) upon Bill or information given to the said Chancellor, call before them . . . any misdoer, and examine them, or any others . . . to whom the truth shall be known ; and such as they find (guilty) to punish as they ought to be punished if they were convicted by the due order of the law."

So ran the Act, describing the special session of the Council sitting to try the special cases named, and to punish according to "due order of the law." But having obtained Parliament's sanction for this part of the Council's work, Henry and his Councillors, and their successors, took no trouble in keeping this new law exactly. They went on trying cases according

* "*Livery*" *was the custom of giving a hat, scarf, badge or gown, together very often with food and lodging, to men who entered into service* (*see Book III. Chap. X.*).

† *This custom was called Maintenance* (*see ibid.*).

to their own old customs, without altering them to fit the new law. Their ways were different from those of ordinary English law courts. They did not use a jury. This meant that there was less chance of corrupt influence than in an ordinary court, because in those days retainers often sat upon juries. Moreover, the punishments they gave, of fine or imprisonment, were far heavier than the customary ones.

Henry VII. took two steps to make this special work of the Council known and accessible to people. First, he gave it a special, fixed place in which to work. When the King was at Westminster, the Council had often sat in the old room called the Star Chamber, in the Palace of Westminster. It opened from New Palace Yard, in the block of buildings along the riverside. In this room, Henry decided, the special work of trying men was to be carried on by some Councillors, whether the King were at Westminster or elsewhere.* Secondly, he caused his Councillors to sit in the Star Chamber throughout the ordinary law terms.

The Councillors were called upon to deal with cases like the following one. John Fitzherbert, a landed gentleman of Derbyshire, claimed some land held by his neighbour, John Madeley, of Quixhill, just over the county border, in Staffordshire. Fitzherbert determined to treat the fields in question as his own, went down in harvest time with his servants, and reaped the crops, and carted the grain home. For this wrong Madeley obtained a judgment against Fitzherbert in the local court. But Fitzherbert refused to give up the corn, as the court ordered. He and his servants came to Madeley's house on February 9, 1494, broke in his doors, drove off six cows and a horse, and left them for five days in a pound.

Madeley began a Star Chamber law suit about Easter,

* *The Privy Council met to help the King with general advice, in whatever place he happened to be.*

1496. The first step was to write a "Bill of Complaint." The Bill had to explain that violence had been used. Also, it asked that the misdoer should be summoned before the Star Chamber, either by a letter of "Privy Seal," or by the mouth of a royal sergeant-at-arms. The Bill in such a case was to be addressed to the Lord Chancellor; at least, so said the Act of 1487. But, like many others, Madeley did not go by the Act. He followed the old way of addressing petitions to the Council, the way that people in his position had always used. He began—

"To the Kyng oure Soverane lord, and to all the noble and discrete lordes of hys most honerable Council.

"Shewyth mekely unto youre Highnes' noble and sadde (grave) discrecions, youre humble and true liegeman and oratour (petitioner) John Madeley, of Quykkeshull in your Countie of Stafford, that where (whereas) John Fitzherbert of Norbury in Youre Countie of Derby, Esquier, . . . the 9th day of Feveryere (February) in the 9th yere of youre moost noble reigne, come to Quykkeshull aforesaid, with 8 persons in hys company, to youre besecher unknowen, and then and there brake up the dores of youre said besecher, and entred into hys house, and there toke out and drave away 6 kyen and a horse, and them drave to Glaxton, and there . . . ympouned them [put them in the pound] by the space of 5 dais where thurgh the horse died, wythoute any offence or trespace by your said besecher to hym done, and the kyne he kept . . . . Please youre said Highnes, of youre most noble and habundaunt grace, and your noble and sadde discrecions, . . . of youre gracious and blessyd disposion (disposition) . . . by the advice of youre discrete lordes, to graunte youre gracious lettres of Prive (Privy) Seale, . . . to the said John Fitzherbert . . . commaunding hym upon his leigiaunce (allegiance) to appere afore youre grace, and the noble lordes of your Counsell, to Aunswere to the premisses . . . and thys for the love of God, and in the way of charite."

Madeley's bill went in about Easter time. Archbishop Morton, the Lord Chancellor read it, and gave it to the clerk of the court, who noted the particulars. Meantime the Chancellor directed his clerks to write out the "letter of Privy Seal," ordering Fitzherbert to appear on pain, perhaps, of £10. The Keeper of the Privy Seal sealed it, and sent it by messenger down into Derbyshire.

Fitzherbert obeyed it. One can imagine him riding up and

lodging at one of the taverns opposite the gatehouse of New Palace Yard. It was but a short walk through the yard to the Star Chamber. On the first morning Fitzherbert was in time perhaps to see the Lord Chancellor's servant coming from the Chancery bearing a gilt mace; other servants followed, shouting, "Make way, my masters, make way for my Lord's Grace." Then Morton swept past in his rustling scarlet cassock, and was followed in at the door by gentlemen, and by his clerks and servants. In little groups the Privy Councillors began to pass in, and at last the suitors were admitted. Fitzherbert saw the Chancellor on his raised seat, with his clerks standing beside him, and beyond them sat the Privy Councillors. The clerk of the court brought him a form, containing a promise not to depart without leave from the court. To this he had to put his seal. Then the clerk read Madeley's Bill, and told Fitzherbert to bring a written answer within a week. And he told him he must be prepared to swear on the Gospels that what he had written in his answer was true.

In a week's time Fitzherbert came back, and handed in a document drawn up in the proper form.

"This is the answer of John Fitzherbert esquier to the Bill of Complaint of John Madeley.

"The same John saith that the said Bill is insufficient and uncertain. . . . But for declaracion of the truth he saith that [the house and land belonged to him], . . . and the same John Fitzherbert . . . came to Quyksull aforesaid with three of his dayly seruantes, as he most comonly useth to walk, and then and there found a hors and six bestes (beasts) damage feasaunt (doing) in his owne Frehold, by force whereof the said John toke the said hors and bestes . . . and them lawfully empounded, . . . by the space of one day and one nyght, and that . . . they were delyverd to the said John Madeley . . . sauff and sownd."

All these and the other points in his defence, Fitzherbert declared himself ready to prove—

"As youre gracious lordshippes shall think reasonable, . . . and he prayeth to be dismissed with his costes and charges for his wrongful vexation and trouble."

After the "answer" was given in, the plaintiff could re-answer, and be answered again by his opponent. Madeley sent in his re-answer, and Fitzherbert made his response in another long document.

Then followed the Interrogatory. At the Interrogatory, Fitzherbert was sworn, and then the Lord Chancellor asked him a question. His manner was probably rough and unfriendly, for we know that Cardinal Morton liked to test a man by trying to abash him. Fitzherbert answered, and perhaps there was spirit and honesty in his answer; perhaps he answered sullenly. We do not know. Cardinal Morton asked five or six questions about things Fitzherbert had said.

Meantime the Chancellor had chosen certain gentlemen of Staffordshire and Derbyshire to act as commissioners to examine local witnesses. He appointed the Abbots of Dieulacres, of Rowcester, and of Crokesden. The three Abbots examined certain old people of the neighbourhood, likely to know the truth. Richard Wener, of Quixhill, a blind man, eighty years old, was sworn before them, and said that he was born upon the ground in Quixhill now in variance, "where J. Madeley now dwelleth," and that Madeley had always been tenant of it, and not owner, whereas Fitzherbert's father had bought the land; Richard remembered the actual sale "because some one brought in a white woodcock, the which was given to my Lady Hastings that now is."

Richard John, sixty years old, said on oath that "he had dwelled upon the ground in Quixhill where John Madeley now dwelleth, with one William, his uncle," and at that time they paid their rent to Wener's father, who was bailiff to the Fitzherberts. The old men no doubt spoke the more freely because they were before the three reverend abbots, and because Master Madeley and Master Fitzherbert were not there, and could do nothing to browbeat them.

The report was sent to London, and read out at a meeting of the Star Chamber, some time in June. It was, of course, an advantage that the testimony was set down in writing. It was very easy to bully a witness; but the written record could hardly be tampered with. Moreover, Madeley and Fitzherbert did not know what the witnesses had said.

Then judgment was given in a curious way. The most recently appointed councillor spoke first, then the rest in order, every councillor who was present speaking, and last and weightiest, the Chancellor. Except the Chancellor each stood up to speak, and uncovered. The judgment went by the majority of voices. It was called a "Decree of the Star Chamber." The sentence probably ran thus :—

"In the matter at variance before the most reverend father in God the archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of England, and other the lords of the King's most noble Council between John Madeley of Quixhill in the County of Stafford, and John Fitzherbert of Norbury in the County of Derby, esquire, by the said Council well seen and ripely understood, it is ordered and decreed by the said Council, that . . ."

Unfortunately the judgment, like almost all the Star Chamber decrees, has been lost. The evidence looks as if Fitzherbert must have won the case. Whoever lost would be liable to pay a fine. The ordinary law demanded this. It would be interesting to know how much the loser in this case had to pay. Almost certainly, he would pay far more heavily than in the ordinary Courts.

Thus a Star Chamber case included the Petition, Summons, Answer, Interrogatory, Commission to take evidence, Judgment and Punishment.

As soon as men found that the King's Council really did punish the strong, they came eagerly to ask for redress. Records of numbers of cases have survived. They show us how ordinary middle-class people used the Star Chamber for

all sorts of affairs. People who had secured justice through the Council certainly did not hate the Star Chamber. Strong and violent offenders who had been punished in it most probably did hate it. But, little by little, they, too, learnt from their experience that they must fear the King and keep his law, and thus violence diminished. A Lord Chancellor had once said that lords must learn to dread the King.* In 1535 a Hampshire gentleman wrote to the King's secretary, to tell him how another gentleman had attacked and hurt his brother. †

"I write to you for redress, for if it were not more for dread of the King than of God, I would have been revenged."

It was because high and low had learnt to fear the King and keep the law, that daily life became more secure. This it was which lay at the root of the nation's love for the Tudor Kings.

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Dicey, A.	The Privy Council ..	*Macmillan & Co.*
Fisher, H. A. L. ..	The Political History of England, 1485–1547	*Longmans.*
Leadam, I. ..	The Star Chamber ..	*The Selden Society.*

* *See p.* 19.

† *We do not know whether this incident actually led to a Star Chamber case or not.*

CHAPTER III

VILLAGE LIFE

I. The Early Tudor Village

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, village life was going on as it had done for centuries before, in very many

Fig. 4.—Cottages at Worplesdon, Surrey, as they are at present. These houses were built in the sixteenth century.

ways. The houses were still of the old timber-framed sort, designed and built by the goodman himself, or by the village carpenter, with the materials at hand. They continued to

be built thus throughout the sixteenth century. An Essex clergyman, William Harrison, wrote in Elizabeth's reign—

"It is not in vain, therefore, in speaking of building, to make a distinction between the plaine and woodie soiles, for as in these [*i.e.* the woody soils] our houses are commonly strong and well-timbered, so that in manie places there are not above foure or six or nine inches between stud and stud *; so in the open . . . countries, they are enforced for want of stuffe to use no studs at all, but only . . . beams, . . . transoms, . . . and such principals,† and then cast it all over with thick claie to keep out the wind. . . . Of old time oure countrie houses, instead of glasse, did use much lattise, and that made either of wicker or fine rifts of oke in checkerwise."

Harrison wrote in 1587, but his words were true also of country cottages and houses in 1500. Cottages built on a "woodie soile" are shown in the picture on p. 27, for Worplesdon stood in woody country on the outskirts of the Berkshire forest.

In a smaller cottage dwelt the cottager, a man who had only his dwelling and garden, and paid a few pence a year for them to the Lord of the Manor. The cottager worked as a day labourer, and kept geese, pigs, and perhaps one or two sheep, which he turned out on to the common pasture surrounding the village. Beside his house (or even inside it ‡) stood his pigstye and hen-roost.

Superior in property and standing was the "copyholder." This man's predecessors had been "villeins" §; for generation after generation they had laboured two or three days a week for the Lord of the Manor, in return for some thirty acres of

* *A stud is one of the smaller uprights which stand at intervals between the principal posts, in a timber-framed wall. It is only the height of one storey* (*Murray's "Oxford Dict."*).

† *Beams and transoms are technical names for the principal posts in such a wall.*

‡ *Early in the seventeenth century Bishop Hall described the one-roomed cottage of the poor copyholder :—*

> *"At his bed's feete feeden his stallèd team,*
> *His swine beneath, his pullen* [*hens*] *o'er the beam."*

See Book V. Chap. I. p. 23. *Chaucer had described a similar cottage in the fourteenth century* ("*Tale of Chanticler*").

§ *See Book III. Chap. I.*

brown plough-land, and some meadow-land, and proportionate rights of sending plough-oxen, sheep, and horses on to the common pasture. But as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had crept on, many villeins had won from their lords the privilege of paying money instead of doing work. Moreover, whether they paid or laboured, the manor bailiff had begun to write down the terms on which each man held his land upon the roll of the manor court.* The tenant got a copy of this entry, and so could see what his services actually were. So these tenants were now (about 1500) often called by the newer name, "copyholder," instead of the old name, "villein," with all its associations of hard work and bondage. Yet the copyholder's son still had to apply for his father's land in the manor court, and to pay the best beast, or the best garment or pot, as a "heriot," upon his father's death. The copyholder still ranked far below the freeholder. A freeholder's land descended to his son with certainty. The freeholder returned only very light dues to the Lord for his land; as a rule, he had a very small sum of money, and attended the lord's manor court.

Both the freeholders and the more important copyholders were real husbandmen, living in farmers' surroundings. Beside the homestead of a prosperous freeholder, stood the timber-built stable, locked and barred at night, for it contained, beside the horses, the pack-saddle, the horse-collars and harness, the farm-cart and great harvest-wain, the plough, made in those days of wood, with its iron ploughshare, and the ox-yoke and collars for the oxen that dragged it along the furrows. The oxen were kept outside except in the winter. Near by was the timber-built barn; the flails hung there until they were taken down for use in autumn,

* *The manor court was the assembly of all the tenants of the manor, held every three weeks.*

and there, too, hung the winnowing fan,* and the hay rakes and forks. Beside the barn was the cow stall, to house the kine in the winter nights.

Around the village, the open fields still stretched far and wide. Each man still held his arable acres mostly in half-acre strips, scattered over three great fields; and upon these strips, and upon the meadow-land and pasture, the round of agriculture still went on as of old.

The farmer's year begins naturally in October, because preparations for wheat sowing begin then. At the very end of September, or early in October, the people of the village brought out their oxen, yoked them to the ploughs, and ploughed up the stubble on the two fields which had borne crops. One—that which had just borne barley—was then left fallow for a year. The third village field had been lying fallow during the year just past; and now it was ploughed up, so that wheat might be sown in its soil, fresh and strong. Every day, at noon, the weary oxen were unyoked and watered and driven off by the common herdsman to the open, common pastures, whither all, tenants and lord alike, might send their beasts to graze. But sometimes the tired oxen found but little grass, for the village cattle had been grazing upon the commons all the summer.

All the girls, big and small, picked over the seed corn by hand. Then the men sowed the wheat. Then the housewives got busy with the salting and sousing of the pigs and oxen killed at the great Martinmas slaughtering [November 10]; for in the winter fodder was usually very short.

* *Tusser, in his "Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandrie" (see p. 41), says, "Flail, strawfork, and rake, with a fan that is strong." The fan seems to have been something akin to a windmill sail made of wood and canvas worked by hand over the grain. No doubt an old sack often did duty as a fan.*

October brought, too, the threshing out of the grain with the handflails, which beat rhythmically upon the earthern floor of the barn. The threshing lasted on through the winter. But with the colder weather, out-of-door work slackened. The cattle and sheep were left out grazing, it is true, under the care of the herdsman and shepherd, wrapped up in their old gray cloaks against the cold. But if the weather grew too bad, the cattle had to be driven in through the snow to the cow stalls; and then the village was wrapped up in winter garb. Alexander Barclay, a Scottish priest, who lived in Devon, wrote in 1509—

"The wynter snowes, all covered is the grounde,
The northe wynde blowys, all with a fereful sounde,
The longe yse sycles [icicles] at the hewsys [eaves] honge [hang]
The streames frosen, the nyght is colde and longe;
Where botes rowed, now cartes have passage,
Frome yoke the oxen be lowsed, and bondage.
The ploughman resteth, avoyde of all busynesse,
Save when he tendeth, his harnes for to dresse.
Mably [Mable] his wife sytteth byfore the fyre
All blacke and smoke-clothed in rude atyre
Sethynge some grewell and sterynge the pulment [porridge]
Of pease or frument [frumenty, grain], a noble meat for Lent!
The somer season men counteth now laudable,
Whose fervour [heat] before they thought intollerable.
. . . . . .
Thus mutable men them pleasèd cannot holde
At grete hete grutchynge [grudging, grumbling] and grutchynge whan it is colde!"

Then came Christmas, the time of holiday to all but the housewife; the time "full of joy to the greatest and least"—

"At Christmas banket [banquet] the rich with the poor,
Who then, but the miser, but openeth his door?" *

It was the time when men and women sat by the fire, "with apples, cheese, and nuts, jolly carols to hear," when singers went from door to door, when the church shone with candlelight. Next came Twelfth Night, and then Plow Monday,

* *Tusser*, "*Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandrie*," 1557.

when the ploughs went out again to the fields, and in many villages carters and ploughmen dressed up and performed a traditional play, half acting, half dancing—sword dance, morris dance, and country dance—ending with a " gathering " or collection to the cry of " Largesse ! "

The men went out to work, ploughmen and shepherds and all, to plough and harrow (February), to sow pease and barley (March), and to look after the first young lambs and the ewes. Then as spring turned into summer, came the fencing in of meadow-land (*see* Map 3); May Day brought the May gathering and May games. In June came sheep-shearing and the sheap-shearing feast.* Then, on the day agreed on by all tenants and lord in the Manor Court, down to the meadow went men, women, and children ; and the mowers, followed by the haymakers, swung across the meadow. The lord's hay was cut by his hired farm servants and labourers. Of the tenants each man had his own strip and carted his own hay, helped by his wife, who, indeed, shared much of his work.

" It is a wyve's occupation to wynowe all manner of corn, to make malte, to wash and wrynge, to make hay, shere [reap] corn, and in time of nede t help her husbande to fyll the muckwayne or doungecarte, dryve the plough, to load hay, corne and such other." †

Then came corn harvest, and all feared foul weather—

" Get bottles and wallets, keep field in the heat,
The fear is as much as the danger is greate."

When the battle was won, the farm servants and labourers brought home the last load in triumph, wreathed with field flowers—

" Come home loud singing
Come home corn bringing ! " ‡

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* *Winter's Tale, Act IV. scenes* 1 *and* 2.

† *Fitzherbert*, 1523.

‡ *Our knowledge of the farmer's year in the early part of the century is derived largely from Fitzherbert's " Boke of Husbandrie " (see p.* 12). *In* 1557 *appeared Tusser's " Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandrie."*

But into this conservative village life, change had already begun to creep. The farming of the fields was altering. During the fifteenth century, lords and tenants had been improving their farming in one way. Fitzherbert,* writing in 1523, says—

"By the assent of the lord and tenants, every neighbour may exchange lands with other."

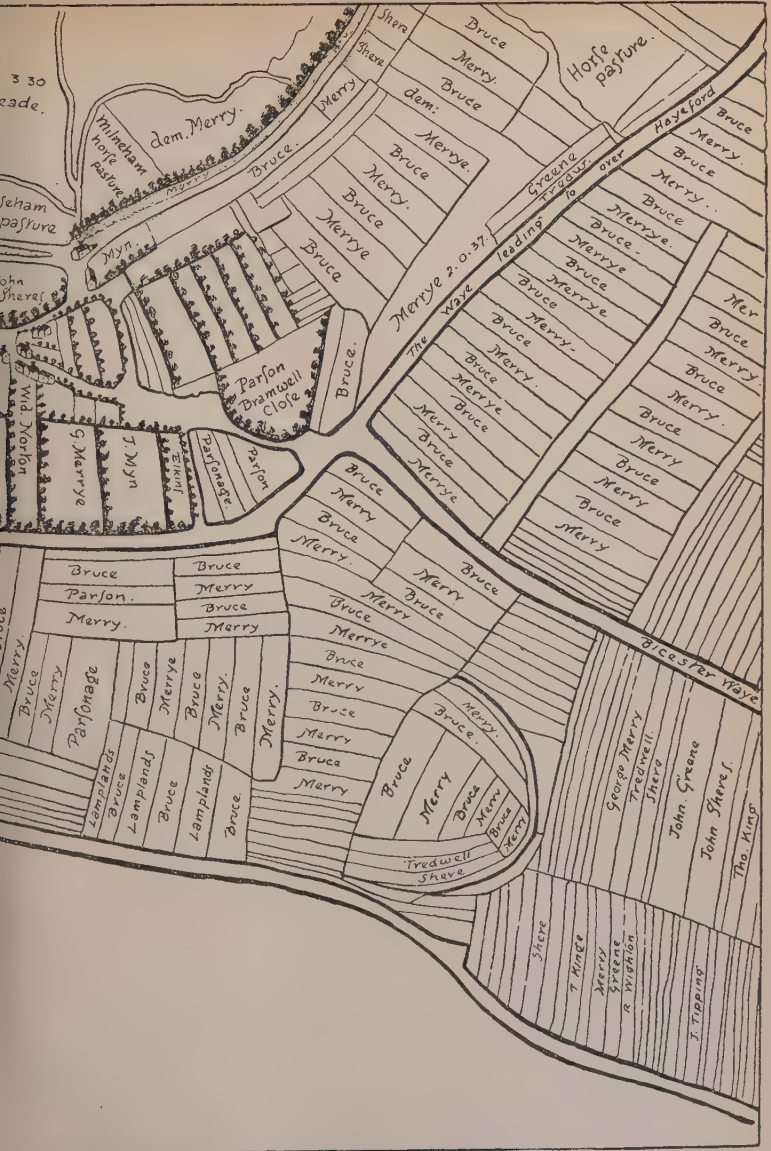
Such exchanges were made, doubtless after long, rambling negotiations between neighbour and neighbour. By exchanging arable half-acre strips, a man could get the three or four strips he held scattered over one field, to lie side by side. The plan of Heyford (Oxon.) † shows a village in which, in the western part, in the year 1606, individual tenants still had scattered strips in some places, in others, strips lying side by side, and in others again, little fields with hedges and gate. Along the south-east border of Heyford field, we can see the old, old half-acre strips, each belonging to a different tenant—J. Merry, T. Merry, T. Bruce, T. Tredwell, The Parson, J. Sheres, and so on. But in the same field, just north of these strips, among the half-acre pieces, lies one piece of an acre and a half, belonging to J. Sheres. Evidently Sheres or his father or his grandfather had exchanged some other strip for the neighbouring one on either hand. In the field just north of "Bicester Waye," and in its western part, almost every strip was of two acres in extent. They belonged alternately to T. Bruce and J. Merry, the two most important tenants in the parish. The next step would be for Bruce to take all Merry's strips in half the field, and for Merry to take all Bruce's strips in the other half. Then each would have his own uninterrupted

In this book the farmer's year is described month by month in the greatest detail. Barclay's "Eclogues" gives pictures of other sides of village life. E. K. Chambers's "Mediæval Stage" has thrown great light on Church and village plays.

* *See p.* 39.

† *See Map* 3.

MAP 3.—Plan of part of Heyford village (Oxon.) in 1606. This plan shows many strips of arable land had been "laid together." On the eastern was there that all the lesser tenants had their strips, intermingled in the



the western part of the village. In the fields on this side of the parish, side of the parish, very few men had "laid their strips together." It old way.

stretch of open, unfenced land. There remained a further step, which Bruce and Merry had already taken with another part of their lands. The two fields marked "Farmer's New Close" belonged one to Bruce, the other to Merry. Each field was eleven acres in extent. As the map shows clearly, each had dug a ditch round his own field, and had planted a hedge, with here and there a hedgerow tree, obeying the advice of Fitzherbert—

> "If thou hast several [*i.e.* separate] pastures, thou must needs have quycksetting *. . . . Gette thy quycksettes in the wood countrey, and let them be of whytethorne or crabtree, for they be beste; holye and hasele be good. And if thou dwelle in the playn countreye, than [then] mayste thou gete both asshe, oke, and elme. . . . But get no blackthorne, for no thing [*i.e.* not on any account], for that wyl growe outwarde into the pastures, and doth moche hurte in the grasse, and tearing the woll of the shepe." †

To do this was called "making a close," or "enclosing." Slowly, in this way, tenants were bringing their lands together. Often they took years, or generations even, over it.

The advantages of this friendly and gradual enclosure of arable strips were great. Such enclosure benefited both the crops and the cattle. In the "close," crops were sheltered from cold winds, protected from straying cattle, and less open to wind-borne seeds of thistle and dandelion. Moreover, now that the field lay outside the co-operative ploughing of the intermingled strips, the farmer could plough when he thought best. Besides, he could sow what seed he thought fittest, even if his neighbours had all decided upon another crop. The labourer did not spend time walking from strip to strip, as of old; nor need the muck-wain creak round the great open field, laying a load of dung now here, now there. Men

* *Quicksetting=planting live cuttings taken from shrubs or plants, instead of sowing or transplanting full-grown specimens. It is in this way that hedges were usually made.*

† *Fitzherbert, "Boke of Husbandrie" (English Dialect Soc.), p.* 78.

were more likely to manure their land, now that it was so much less trouble.

Secondly, the cattle and oxen were better fed. They got better grazing if they were turned into an arable close, lying fallow, than if they went on to the open strips. It would have been a good thing for the cattle had the wild common pasture been enclosed by friendly division, as well as the arable. Here and there this was being done in the fifteenth century.

But this change in village life was not the most striking one. Above all others, was the change from lawlessness to comparative peace. In 1500 all grown-up people had lived through times when the chief tenants in their village all wore the badge of an Earl or Lord, or even of some petty gentleman near by, and did violence to their enemies, because the great man protected them from punishment by the King's Judges or his Sheriff.* But by 1500 Henry VII. was teaching men that wrongdoing was followed by punishment. He punished ordinary offenders in the ordinary courts. But he punished rioters and violent aggressors in the Star Chamber.†

He was enabled to do this work because of the downfall of the great families in the Wars of the Roses, and also because of the new feeling in the nation, that the King must be made strong, to protect land and life for all men. This feeling showed itself in two ways. First, Parliament sanctioned the work of the Star Chamber.† Secondly, gentlemen were now willing to carry out the King's orders, and he could rely upon them when he appointed them as Justices of the Peace.‡

* *See Book III. Chap. X.*
† *See Chap. II.*
‡ *See Chap. IV.*

II. The New Farming

The rule of the Tudors gave peace. It was partly this very fact that gave men time to work, and opportunity to increase their undertakings; and out of the growth of industry, of population, and of trade, fresh changes were developing in the villages, as the sixteenth century wore on. There were now so many craftsmen and so many townsmen who did not grow their own food that, for the first time, there was a demand for foodstuffs large enough to affect a great number of villages all over the country. And this demand, in turn, led to a change in the aim of the farmer.

Hitherto the majority of Englishmen had been husbandmen, wringing a living for themselves and their own families out of the land by their unskilful toil. About 1500 an Italian visitor wrote, "Agriculture is not practised in this island beyond what is required for the consumption of the people." Such farming is called "subsistence farming." But gradually, after about 1485–1500, many husbandmen tried to produce as large a surplus as possible, of sacks of corn, head of cattle, baskets of eggs, cheeses, butter—all to be marketed to those who now grew little or no food for themselves. Such farming is called "farming for the market," just as gardening with a similar aim is called market-gardening. Such a demand grew up in the early part of the century around towns, and most around London. By 1560 corn for London was brought even from the Trent valley.* In 1587 an Essex clergyman, William Harrison, wrote about the markets in his shire and complained

* *Cf. Chaps. V. and VII.*

of the men—"bodgers and loders"—who came to buy corn in Essex to sell in London:

"I find that in corn greate abuse is dailie suffered, to the great prejudice of the towne and countrie, especially the poore householder and artificer which tilleth no land but laboring all the weeke to buie a bushell or two of grain on the market daie can there have none for his monie bicause bodgers, loders, and common carriers of corn do not onlie buie up all, but give above the price, to be served of great quantities. . . . It is a world also [*i.e.* a wonder] to see how most places of the Realme are pestered with purveiours who take up eggs butter cheese pigs capons hens hogs bakon, etc. . . . If these chapmen be absent but two or three market daies, then we may perfectlie see these wares to be more reasonablie sold and thereunto the crosses [market crosses] sufficientlie furnished of all things."

The price of corn rose gradually. In May, 1537, a London baker could buy a quarter for 10*s.*; in May, 1569, the price was 16*s.* 6*d.* Neither of these prices was exceptional, they were the ordinary prices of their day.

Farmers were sure of their sales. So the most intelligent tried to improve farming ways in order to get more produce. One of the most energetic was John Fitzherbert, a gentleman whose land lay in the Peak district of Derbyshire. In 1523 his "Boke of Husbandrie" was printed. There, one could read the exact description of the plough itself; how to plough; when to stir the different fields; how to sow, to thresh, reap, mow, and bind; an exact description of weeds, cockle, thistle, dock, dog fennel, and tares; and how to deal with each. For he saw that the earth required most careful and detailed work. Fitzherbert saw, too, that the success of the crop depended largely upon the condition of the plough-beasts and of the sheep and cattle that manured the ground.

"A husbandman cannot thrive by his corn without he have other cattell, nor by his cattell without corn. . . . In every place whereas [where] the husband [husbandman] hath several [separate] pastures to put his oxen in when they come from their worke, there the oxe plough is better. For an oxe may not endure his warke, to labour all daye, and than to be put to the commons or before the herdman, and to be set in a folde all nyghte without meate (fodder) and go to his

labour in the mornynge. But an he be put in a good pasture all nyghte, he will labour moche of all the daie dayely."

One other change Fitzherbert wanted to make. He wished men to enclose pasture, the old, spacious, wild lawns and downs and thickets around the villages. For Fitzherbert knew what the defects of these pastures were. First, they were often eaten bare, as Tusser also saw, more than thirty years later. Tusser wrote :—

> "Where cattle may run about roving at will
> From pasture to pasture poor belly to fill
> These pasture and cattle both hungry and bare
> For want of good husbandry worser do fare."

Secondly, the village herd, driven along by the common herdsman, contained weak, poor beasts, and beasts newly bought, who might bring perhaps murrain, an infectious disease, or the contagious foot and mouth disease, to all the animals of the place. Thus the village herd was dangerous. So, too, was the village sheep flock, which trotted in front of the shepherd, with his dog and his whistle. For the scab, the commonest disease of sheep, is infectious. Besides, there is a tiny parasite which breeds in swampy ground, and then attacks sheep and kills them by the illness called "the Rot." This disease can only be prevented by draining pastures. But the wide old pastures were quite virgin. Even in the arable strips, the only drainage was from the middle of the strip, where the earth was high, down to a wide furrow that ran along beside the balk. Nowadays, almost every field that we see, arable or pasture, has drain pipes under its surface. But then it was not so.

To guard against these dangers, Fitzherbert wrote :

> "If a husband shall kepe cattel well to his profytte he must have severall [separate] closes and pastures to put his cattell in, the which wolde be wel quycksetted, diched, and hedged, that he may sever the byggeste cattell frome the weykeste at his pleasure and specyallye in wynter tyme whan they shall be fodered. And thoughe a man be but

a farmer [*i.e.* have land only on hire at a rent] and shall have his farme 20 yeares, it is lesse cost for him and more profytte to quycksette dyche and hedge than to have his cattell goo before the herdeman."

Thirty-four years later, in 1557, a quick-witted man who was farming land in Suffolk, called Thomas Tusser, published "A Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandrie." He repeated, in his own curious vehement way, much that Fitzherbert had said in plain dignified words about the care of the land, and of the plough oxen. He, too, recommended men to enclose pasture lands.

"Some commons are barren, their nature is such,
And some [men] overlaieth the commons too much,
The pestired [tormented, *i.e.* over-burdened] commons small profit
And profit as little some reape I beleeve. [doth geeve

"Some pester the commons with jades [small horses, ponies] and with [geese,
With hog without ring,* and with sheep without fleese [*i.e.* diseased],
Some lose a daie labour with seeking their own,
Some meet with a bootie [spoil, loot] they would not have known.†

"Great troubles and losses the champion [open-field farmer] sees,
And ever in brauling [brawling, quarrelling] as wasps among bees,
As charitie that way appeereth but small,
So lesse be their winnings or nothing at all.

"Where champion wanteth [*i.e.* has not got] a swine herd for hog,
There many complaineth of naughtie man's dog,
Where ech his own keper appoints without care,
There corne is destroièd er men be aware."

Tusser lived among the rich cornlands of Suffolk, where in many villages the arable strips were already laid together and actually enclosed.‡ Perhaps this is why he wrote so eagerly to persuade men to enclose their arable strips, as well as their pasture. He told people what profit enclosure of the arable gave,

"Example (if doubt ye doo make),
By Suffolke and Essex go take."

---

* *Unringed swine destroy turf and grass.*
† *I.e. they carry off other people's property.*
‡ *See p.* 36.

"More plentie of mutton and biefe,
Corne, butter and cheese of the best,
More wealth anywhere (to be briefe)
More people, more handsome and prest [quick, neat],
Where find ye ? (go search any coast)
Than there where enclosure is most.

"More worke for the labouring man
As well in the towne as the feeld
Or thereof (devise if ye can)
More profit what countries doo yeeld ?
More seldom where see ye the poore
Go begging from doore unto doore ?

"The countrie enclosèd I praise
The t'other delighteth not me,
For nothing the wealth it doth raise
To such as inferior be.
How both of them partly I knowe
Here somewhat I mind for to showe."

And then he pointed out how the open corn-fields were damaged by straying oxen and horses and sheep, how all the neighbours quarrelled, and how they were all bound by the same routine of ploughing, sowing and fallowing,

"Good lands that are several [separate], crops may have three,
In champion country it may not so be.
Th' one taketh his season as commoners may,
The t'other with reason may otherwise say."

Throughout England, in many villages, tenants were laying strip by strip, and gradually enclosing arable land. When Leland journeyed about in England in 1536–40, his route led him across much enclosed land in certain districts. These parts were Kent, Essex, eastern Surrey, part of Suffolk, Cornwall, parts of Devon and western Somerset.

Change of another kind, however, was going on in some villages as early as 1485. The arable was being enclosed, but in a way quite different from friendly exchange. In these villages lords ceased to let out farms. They pulled down the

homesteads, kept the empty holdings in their own hands, and cultivated the strips. Often these strips lay beside other strips belonging to the lord. Then he enclosed them all with hedge and ditch. He could afford stock and seed and labour for all this land. In other villages it was the richer tenants who persuaded the lord to let them hold two or three holdings. Then they, too, pulled down the homesteads which they did not use ; farm servants who had lived with the old tenants were often not needed, and away they had to go. About 1508, in West Sandford [Berks.],

"James Braybrooke held of the Abbot of Abingdon, . . . one [house] called Brewmans, and 60 acres of arable land . . . and had that house pulled down and laid waste, and so that house is at this day [1517] . . . And . . . (he) . . . held of the said Abbot . . . (another house) and 80 acres of arable land . . . and caused that house to be pulled down and laid waste. . . . And by the said causes, six persons went out from their habitations in West Sandford, wandering elsewhere." *

Then the owner often planted hedges round his arable strips, and so made real "closes." Enclosure of this sort was going on in villages in the Midlands—in the counties extending from Wilts and Berks, northward to southern Yorkshire, and north-east to Norfolk. Within this district it was worth while to grow corn on a large scale ; for it could now be sent to London.

Similar changes were made, too, by men who wanted to farm not for corn, but for wool. They could sell the wool to English weavers now.† Sheep farming required far fewer farm servants than farming for wheat. This was one reason why it paid. So gentlemen sometimes set to work to empty their

* *This is the account given by Braybrooke's neighbour to Wolsey's Commissioners in* 1517 (*see p.* 47, *and cf. p.* 67).

† *In* 1352 *England exported* 4774 *pieces of cloth ; in* 1510, 35,000 *pieces of cloth ; in* 1554, 160,000 *pieces of cloth.*

lands of tenants so as to turn the arable land into pasture. This happened at Noseley in Leicestershire. Noseley Hall, the home of the Hazelrigge family, lay in a hollow in the park, which was full of great trees and thickets. When Henry VII. came to the throne, Master Thomas Hazelrigge was lord there, and after him his son William. The open fields of the village were loamy and fertile. Hazelrigge held many arable strips ; the rest belonged to his tenants, who lived in the five homesteads and six smaller cottages that made up the village. It chanced that none of these tenants were freeholders. They were all copyholders ; and upon the manor of Noseley the custom was that when a copyholder's heir came to the Manor Court to ask Master Hazelrigge for his father's land, the lord might refuse.* But time after time, as long as old men could remember, the lord had not used this right. However, during the reign of Henry VII., Hazelrigge must have thought out a complete change in the management of his estate. To the astonishment of the whole village, a day came when a copyholder's heir made his claim, and the steward said that Master Hazelrigge would not renew the tenancy. And after that Master Hazelrigge refused every such request. More and more dismal grew the future for oldish tenants with families. What were their sons to do ? One after another the empty cottages fell down ; each spring other strips in the arable fields were allowed to revert to pasture, and Mr. Hazelrigge's shepherd drove more and more sheep on to them. By 1504 every house was down, and the village was gone, and round the place where it had stood, stretched green pastures, dotted with white sheep.

On some manors, the custom of the manor was that the lord must grant the father's copyhold to the son. If he failed

* *This custom existed on many manors, but, it was more common that the lord should be bound by custom to regrant the land.*

to do so, the Lord Chancellor would interfere to protect the heir. But the heir had always to pay a sum of money called "a fine" when he obtained the land. And often the lord's steward now began to ask three or four times the old sum. "These extortioners . . . made of a 40*s.* fine, £40!" said one tenant, who was very angry. Some tenants could not pay, and

Fig. 5.—A Tenant paying Rent. From Fitzherbert's "Treatise on Surveying," 1523.

had to go. "I know no other way but of force [*i.e.* of necessity] . . . to go abegging up and down the country," said a Northumbrian copyholder, with eight children, in such a case. It was in these ways that manors were emptied of copyholders and cottagers. On the plan of Whadborough manor, in Leicestershire, made in 1620, nothing is marked but fenced-in pasture fields; at one place is written: "The Place where the town

of Whatboroughe stood." It was of the tenants in places like these in 1515 that Sir T. More wrote * : "

"By one means therefore or by other, by hook or by crook, they must needs depart away, poor silly [innocent] wretched souls, men, women, husbands, wives, fatherless children, widows, woful mothers with their young babes, and their whole household, small in substance, and much in number, as husbandry requireth many hands. Away they trudge, I say, out of their known and accustomed houses, finding no places to rest in."

In the reign of Edward VI. a priest, Thomas Bacon, who lived for a time in Leicestershire, wrote :

"Truth it is . . . I myself know many villages sore decayed, for . . . whereas in time past there were in some a hundred households, there remain now not thirty, in some fifty, there remain now not ten, . . . I know (villages) so wholly decayed that there is neither stick nor stone standing, as they use to say. . . . Where many men had good livings, and maintained hospitality, able to help the King in his wars, and virtuously to bring up their children, . . . now sheep and conies [rabbits] devour al together, no man inhabiting the aforesaid places."

Henry VII. was determined to check enclosures. He saw that they ruined copyholders, who were also taxpayers, and soldiers in his army in time of need. In 1489 King and Parliament enacted that :

"Any person that hath any house, or houses, and land, that any time within three years last past hath been or now is . . . or shall be let to farm with 20 acres of land at least . . . lying in tillage, shall be bound to keep and maintain houses and buildings on the said ground . . . convenient and necessary for maintaining tillage."

For two generations men went on hoping vaguely that the Act would prevent fresh enclosures,† in spite of local complaints, and proofs that enclosure had not stopped. But at last Cardinal Wolsey determined to find out exactly what was going on. In May, 1517, he appointed gentlemen in each shire to act

* "*Utopia*," *Bk. I. p.* 16 (*Clar. Pr.* 1904).

† *In* 1515 *an Act was passed, just like that of* 1489, *except in the date of the appointed day, which became February* 5, 1515.

as Commissioners. They went from place to place in the country; and in each place they put questions to a jury of twelve freeholders:

"What villages or hamlets or houses . . . have been pulled down since Michaelmas, 1488? What pieces of land have been enclosed for pasture since then? How large is each piece? Has any land been enclosed for parks?"

Then the Commissioners sent reports to Wolsey. This is what he found out.* Very many enclosures had been made in the Midland counties running from Berkshire and Oxfordshire to Lincoln and the borders of Norfolk. There was also a northern district, S. Lancashire as far north as Preston, and S. Yorkshire as far north as Wakefield. The greatest number of cases were in Northants, the next in Oxfordshire, and next in Berkshire. But the total amount of land enclosed was very small. Between 1488 and 1518, in Northamptonshire, only about $2\frac{1}{5}$ per cent. of the total area seems to have suffered enclosure. Perhaps about 1400 people were turned out. But their cases were so hard that men's indignation was aroused for them.

Cardinal Wolsey punished those enclosers who held their land straight from the King. This was all that the Act allowed him to do. After his fall men began to enclose again. In 1536, when north country rebels rose in the Pilgrimage of Grace, the men of Westmorland, and Cumberland, and Lincolnshire complained of grievous enclosures. Then Parliament was frightened, and therefore, at last, gave the King power to punish all enclosers everywhere, and not only such as held land from him.

Henry VIII. was very terrible to enclosers, as they stood quaking before him at the Council table, and no Councillor

* *These reports have been preserved for Oxon, Berks, Essex, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Beds, Bucks, Northants, Cheshire. The cases of West Sandford and Noseley are extracted from them.*

dared to whisper a word on their behalf.* But when Henry died, and Lord Protector Somerset began to rule for the little Edward VI., each Councillor spoke out his opinion. Many sympathised much more with the great encloser than with the poor tenant. Somerset himself thought that the tenants ought to be protected just as the old King had protected them, or even more. But he alone could do nothing, for the Council acted on a majority of votes. Somerset talked about enclosures with a friend, John Hales, a man of middle station, an official in the Law Courts. Hales was always thinking about the country and the well-being of all its people. He said : " We be born, not to ourselves, but partly to the use of our country."

In 1547 Hales was elected member for Preston. It was his business, he thought, to move about enclosures. He wrote—

" Albeit I am not one of the King's Council, . . . yet knowing myself to be a member of this Commonweal [Commonwealth], and called to be one of the House where such things ought to be treated, I cannot reckon myself a mere stranger to the matter."

So he suggested to Somerset that the law might be changed. In November, 1547, he made the proposal in Parliament. He said afterwards—

" I had thus devised [planned], that the Parson of every parish and two honest men should yearly survey every man's pastures, and should . . . [report] who did transgress the law."

This report was to be made regularly to the King's judges † at the Assizes. Then the judges would try the offenders and

* *Henry punished many offenders, and caused many tenants who had been ejected to be replaced in their old homes. But he could only punish* after *the enclosure had been made, and then only if the evicted tenants brought the case to his notice by a petition. Often they were too poor and ignorant to do this.*

† *The King's judges went regularly on rounds called circuits, visiting each part of the country several times a year. The Courts they held, and still hold, were and are called the Assizes.*

punish them. But his Bill was rejected. Somerset knew that the lords and gentry did not want the change. He said bitterly—

"The Lords and Parliament are loth to reform enclosures, therefore the people have cause to reform these things themselves."

Riots had already broken out in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire. So Somerset decided to carry out a second suggestion Hales had made. He sent out Commissioners [June, 1548] to inquire exactly as Wolsey's Commissioners had done in 1517–18.* Among the Commissioners for the shires of Oxon., Berks., Warwick, Leicester, Beds., Bucks., Northants., was Hales. It was Hales who explained to the freeholders what was to be done—

"Good people, by this Commission you perceive the cause of our coming here . . . It extendeth to three principal points, the decay of villages and houses of husbandry, the converting of arable to pasture, and multitude of sheep. Yet doth all together shoot but at one mark, that is, to remove the self-love that is in many, to take away the inordinate desire of riches wherewith the many be encumbered. The force of the Realm consisteth not only in riches, but chiefly in the multitude of people; but sheep and cattle have eaten up the men, by the help of men. Is it not a pitiful case that there should be so little charity among men? Is it not a sorrowful hearing that one Englishman should be set to destroy his fellow-countrymen?"

The twelve freeholders to whom especially Hales was speaking must often have thought, "It is not so easy to do all this." Some perhaps were friends of men who had made enclosures; were they to mention their friends? Others perhaps had been threatened, more or less openly, by enclosers, because Somerset's policy threatened their prosperity. Country gentlemen hated him bitterly for interfering between them and their tenants. One of them said—

"To be plain . . . (I) think my Lord's grace [*i.e.* Somerset] rather to will the decay of the gentlemen than otherwise!"

* *Apparently the Commissioners had copies of the proceedings of* 1517–18 *as guides.*

Many of Somerset's Commissioners felt strongly against him, and would not act at all. They never set out. In the summer of 1549, revolt broke out in the counties of Somerset, Gloucester, Wilts., Dorset, Hants., Bucks., Berks., Oxon., Norfolk.* Somerset now made a fatal mistake. In May, 1549, he had already made proclamation that men who had violently broken down enclosures should be pardoned. Now (June) he issued a similar proclamation to the rebels, saying that they should be pardoned if they returned to obedience. This promise, at such a moment, made people feel that if they let Somerset rule them, he would allow the old days of violence and disorder to come back. The Council appointed the Earl of Warwick † to put down the revolt.‡ The Council sent Somerset to the Tower for his failure to keep the public peace. Hales fled abroad, compelled to give up for ever his own share in guarding the Commonweal of England. Yet Hales and Somerset and the revolt made some impression on men's minds. In 1552 Parliament enacted that Commissioners were to travel about the country and enforce the old existing laws.§

After 1549 there was no other great revolt against enclosures. It was not until 1597 that another Act about enclosures was passed.¶ The reason for this long period of peace was probably the great increase in the demand for

* *Devon and Cornwall had just broken into revolt on religious grounds. Apparently the counties where Hale's Commission had worked remained fairly quiet.*

† *See p.* 65.

‡ *He fought a regular campaign, laid actual siege to Exeter, conquered the rebels of Norfolk, and finally hanged numbers of men.*

§ *This Act was repealed in* 1563.

¶ *It was like the old ones. All lands which had been arable for twelve years before November,* 1558, *were to be farmed as arable. It applied only to the counties of Northants., Leicester, Warwick, Bucks., Beds., Oxon., Berks., Gloucester, Worcs., Notts., Hants., Wilts., Somerset, Dorset, Derby, Rutland, Lincoln, Hereford, Cambs., Hunts., York, Durham, Northumberland, Pembroke.*

corn. Slowly corn became as profitable as wool. In 1500 English farmers had been unable to grow enough corn to feed the nation. In 1600 they grew so much that English merchants exported grain. This change brought great trouble to some villages, but to the majority it brought well-being.

III. The Elizabethan Village

By the end of the century, all classes of tenantry were far better off than their great-grandfathers had been. Freeholders prospered like other husbandmen ; and other causes were adding to their well-being. First, the sum of money which they had always paid for their land now became a mere trifle. For coins were becoming less valuable than they had been. By 1555 vast quantities of the precious metals had been discovered in S. America, and bars and ingots of gold and silver were being brought to Europe. Thus gold and silver became less valuable in comparison with those other things which did not increase suddenly. The purchasing power of money therefore began to fall. Money was never again quite so valuable as it had been. Thus freeholders' small fixed rents became so little valuable that bailiffs of manors often neglected to ask for them. On many a rent-roll, opposite the freeholder's name, the bailiff wrote—

> "He owes suit of Court [attendance at Manor Court]
> And pays ———————— Nil [nothing]."

By the end of the century many freeholders paid neither rent nor service to any man. Moreover, the numbers of freeholders were increasing. For the King sold many small portions of monastic estates as freeholds.

It was of freeholders that Harrison wrote, in 1587—

"Yeomen * are those which by our law are called . . . freemen . . . and may dispende of their owne free land in yearlie revenue to the summe of fortie shillings sterling, or six pounds as monie goeth in our times. . . . This sort of people have a certain preheminence, and more estimation than laborers and the common sort of artificers, and these commonlie live wealthilie, keepe goode houses, and travell (travail) to get riches. They are also for the most part farmers to gentlemen, . . . and with grasing [*i.e.* grazing of cattle], frequenting of markets, and keeping of servants, (not idle servants as the gentlemen do, but such as get both their owne and part of their master's living) do come to great wealth insomuch that manie of them are able and doo buie the lands of unthriftie gentlemen, and often setting their sonnes to the schooles to the Universities and to the Ins of Court, or otherwise leaving them sufficient lands whereupon they may live without labour, doo make them to become gentlemen."

The copyholders, too, were gradually improving in their condition. Since the early part of the fourteenth century, villein tenants had been trying to pay in money and not in labour. Now the copyholder found it easier to sell his corn, or his eggs, poultry, and butter, and so get money. And so it gradually happened that by the end of the century some copyholders were simply paying sums of money every year. Many others did some few old services. But on the whole, the copyholder was becoming like a rent-paying tenant, and one with a light rent.

By the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the prosperity of the countryside showed itself even in the cottages, and on the tables, of small copyholders and poor day labourers.

"The food of the artificer consisteth principally in beefe and such meat as the butcher selleth . . . besides souse, brawne, bacon, fruit, pies of fruit, foules of sundrie sorts, cheese, butter, egs, etc.; as the other [*i.e.* the husbandman] wanteth it not at home by his owne provision. . . . In feasting also this latter sort, I meane the husbandmen, doo exceed after their maner, especiallie at bridales . . . and such od meetings, where it is incredible to tell what meat is consumed and spent, ech one bringing such a dish, or so many, with him as he and his wife doo consult upon. . . . To conclude, . . . when they meet, they

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* *In reality people used the word Yeoman also for prosperous copyholders.*

are so merie without malice, and plaine without inward Italian or French craft and subtiltie that it would do a man good to be in companie among them."

Husbandmen and yeomen began to build better houses. Fig. 6 shows the plan of a farmhouse, built late in Elizabeth's reign by a Hertfordshire yeoman, Goodman Hammond, of Pirton, who farmed about one hundred and fifty acres in the open fields. The house has timber studs [supports] in the old-fashioned way, but the spaces are filled in with the new-fashioned brick.* The plan showed some more new features. Many men were still building on a new form of the older plan, with the hall in the middle of two end blocks (*see* G. Markham's plan, Book V. Fig. 10). But Hammond's was arranged rather like a modern house. The parlour, entered from the porch, took the place of the hall. Kitchen and buttery lie east of it, and perhaps the openings between kitchen and parlour, called the skreens, existed originally in that wall. Two other new things are shown in the picture: first the glass in the windows, and second the chimneys, the smaller parlour chimney, and the large kitchen chimney behind. William Harrison wrote, in 1587:

"There are old men yet dwelling in the village where I remaine," "which have noted three things to be marvellouslie altered in England within their sound remembrance. . . . One is the multitude of chimnies lately erected, whereas in their young daies there were not above two or three if so manie in most uplandish townes. . . . But ech one made his fire against a reredosse in the hall where he dined and dressed his meat."

In Hammond's parlour the furniture probably consisted of oaken coffer, chest, and stools, and benches, with covers and cushions embroidered by the women of the house. On the oaken buffet † gleamed the best dishes and jugs, made of

* *The use of brick went back to the middle of the fifteenth century, but its use for an ordinary farmhouse was new.*

† *See Fig.* 10.

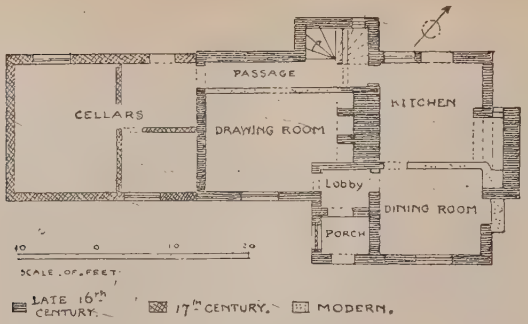

FIG. 6.—Hammond's Farm at Pirton, Herts. Built in Elizabeth's reign.

London pewter.* This furniture seemed costly and new and beautiful then.

"The thirde thing [the old men] tell of is the exchange of vessell, as of treene [wooden] platters into pewter and wooden spoons into silver or tin. . . . The farmer will think his gaines very small towarde the end of his terme, if he have not six or seven yeares rent lieng by him, therewith to purchase a fresh lease, beside a fair garnish [set] of pewter on his cupboard, with so much more in odd vessell going about the house, three or four featherbeds, so manie coverlids and carpets of tapistrie, a silver salt, a bowle for wine and a dozzen of spoones to finish up the sute [suit]."

Upstairs at Hammond's there were three separate bedrooms, one leading out of the other. The ploughman and carters and boys probably slept still in the stables and stalls and dairy on straw. But Hammond himself had very likely a four-poster bed. Probably at night he got between two sheets, lay down on a feather bed, put his head on a pillow stuffed with feathers, and pulled sheet, blankets, and embroidered coverlet up to his chin. Among the old men's recollections—

"The second is the great, though not general [universal] amendment of lodging, for, (said they) our fathers, (yea and we ourselves also) have lien full oft upon straw pallets, on rough mats covered only with a sheet, under coverlets made of dogswain or hopharlots (I use their owne termes) and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow."

Village work everywhere kept many of its old ways. The feasts and games of the village still went on. They were made merrier and richer by the increased prosperity of farmers and men, and the increased choice at market stalls. In the *Winter's Tale*, the Clown says:

"Let me see, what am I to buy for our sheep shearing feast? Three pound of sugar, five pound of currants, rice? What will this sister of mine do with rice? But my father hath made her mistress of the feast, and she lays it on. She hath made four and twenty nosegays for the shearers,—threeman songmen all [*i.e.* singing in three parts], and very good ones. . . . I must have saffron, . . . mace, dates, nutmegs seven, a *race* or two of ginger (but that I may beg), four pound of prunes, and as many of raisins o' the sun."

* *See Chap VI.*

In some ways, old games were altering. The priest no longer shared in them as he had done before the Reformation. At Bicester (Oxon.) the "Pancake Bell" still rang in a holiday on Shrove Tuesday at eleven, though the old connection with the Church was broken. For generations the men of Abbot's Bromley (Staffs.) had danced a "game" on Twelfth Night. There danced a hobbyhorse, and six men disguised under "Raindeer's heads," three painted white and three red. They bore coats-of-arms painted on them as well; probably those of their lord, the Abbot of Burton-on-Trent. When the Dissolution swept away the Abbot, and King Henry granted the village to his secretary, Sir William Paget, the villagers painted out the Abbot's arms, painted in the arms of Paget, and danced on into the seventeenth century. Modified in some such ways, village games and plays continued.

Printed ballads and books were making their way into the country. Country grammar schools taught farmers' sons. Shakespeare shows us the village weaver and tailor acting the classical story of *Pyramus and Thisbe*. Country people began to know more of outside knowledge. They were happy, not only because they were prosperous, but because their minds were roused to more vigorous life by the schools, the ballads, and, lastly, by the power of the English Bible.

BOOK LIST

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Shakespeare ..	Comedies	*Any Edition.*
Ditchfield, P. H. ..	The Manor Houses of England	*Batsford.*
Various Authors ..	Old English Cottages and Farmhouses	,,
Gotch, J. A. ..	Growth of the English House	,,
Hasbach, W. ..	History of the English Agricultural Labourer	*King & Son.*

BOOK LIST—*continued.*

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Prothero, R. H. ..	English Farming (Past and Present)	*Longmans.*
Tawney, R. ..	The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century	,,
Bland, A. E., and Tawney, R.	Select Documents illustrating English Economic History	*G. Bell & Sons.*
C. Sharpe ..	The Morris Book ..	*Novello & Co.*
Pollard, A. F. ..	England under Protector Somerset	*Kegan Paul & Co.*
Wilson, J. D. ..	Life in Shakespeare's England	*Cambridge Press.*
Gomme (Mrs.) ..	Traditional Games of England	*G. Bell & Sons.*
Chambers, E. K.	The Mediæval Stage ..	*Oxford Univ. Press.*
Calthrop, D. C. ..	English Costume (4 vols.)	*Black.*
Planché, J. R. ..	History of British Costume	*G. Bell & Sons.*
Fairholt	History of Costume ..	,,
Quennell, M. & C.	History of Everyday Things	*Batsford.*
Harrison, W. ..	A Description of England	*W. Scott (Camelot Classics).*

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW NOBILITY AND THE GENTRY

When the sixteenth century opened, the gentlemen and Baronage of England were still, as they had been in the fifteenth century, dangerous to the peace of ordinary daily life, and apt to use violence against all men.

About 1500 some of the causes which had made the Baronage "over-mighty" in the past century were still at work. Men still kept households of liveried retainers. Even as late as 1515 Sir Thomas More wrote—

> "Fyrste, there is a great number of gentilmen, which can not be content to lyve ydle them selfes, like dorres [drones], of that other have laboryd for, their tenauntes, I meane. . . . These gentilmen (I say) do not only live in ydilnes themselfes, but also carry about with them at their Tales a great flocke or trayne of ydele and loytrynge servynge men, whych never learned any craft whereby to get their livings."

More tells us, too, how these servants swaggered about with their swords and bucklers, or shields. The records of Star Chamber * cases prove, year by year, how outrageously these men and their masters often behaved. The custom of keeping armed servants, wearing a distinguishing badge, was called Livery. Equally bad was the custom of Maintenance—an agreement between two men to support one another in the law courts and elsewhere, through thick and thin; naturally such an agreement was made most often between some powerful person and a lesser individual. Laws against Livery and

* *See Chap. II.*

Maintenance had existed since the reign of Richard II. In 1429 and 1468 it had been enacted that no man might keep retainers without a licence from the King. But Henry VI., and even Edward IV., had never seen that these laws were obeyed.

The second great cause of the disorder of the fifteenth century had been the excessive wealth of some few noble houses. In each shire a lord was often so much richer than the neighbouring gentlemen that each esquire tried to get into the favour of some county noble, and wanted to wear his livery, were it hat, hood, badge, or gown. The Norfolk squire, John Paston, had felt injured when the Duke of Norfolk omitted to send him his livery; to him it seemed to imply, "You are a man of no importance at all." In that violent age, other men had actually been emboldened to attack Paston's tenants, his manor houses, and his own person, because they were maintained by the Duke of Suffolk.*

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, these fifteenth-century conditions still existed. But they were giving way fast under the attacks of new forces.

In the first place, the Council enforced the laws against Livery and Maintenance in the Star Chamber.† So effective was their work, that lords grew afraid to let their men be seen about in livery. In 1516 the Earl of Shrewsbury received a hasty letter from a friend in London, caused by the imprudence of one of the Earl's servants. The friend wrote—

"As the reverence of God, my lord, take heed to it, for Bulkeley, at his first coming, until such time as som spied it, ware your badge upon him."

By royal licence, however, retainers might be kept. Many licences have been preserved, and they prove how few such henchmen the King permitted—50 or 60 or 100—to men whose fathers had had 400 or 500.‡

* *See Book III. Chap. X.* † *See Chap. II.*

‡ *In* 1454 *the Earl of Shrewsbury had come to town with* 140 *knights*

In earlier days Henry VI. had often pardoned nobles who had done very serious misdeeds, for which they ought to have been punished by the ordinary law. But Henry VII. and Henry VIII. would neither help nor pardon * men who had broken the law, even if they were men of noble rank, or even if they were friends of the King's own. By this means, too, the nobleman was being forced to respect the law.

The second great cause of change was that the extreme wealth of certain great families, which had enabled them to keep mighty households, was impaired or gone. Many great families had been ruined during the Wars of the Roses. As one side came uppermost, the leading opponents were attainted of treason. When a man was condemned as a traitor, all his lands went to the King as forfeitures, and consequently his family was beggared. Thus Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the Kingmaker, and his brother George Neville, Marquis Montague, both killed at Barnet in 1471, were declared traitors; George, Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward III., son-in-law of Earl Richard, married one of Richard's two daughters,† and she was allowed to bring the Midland and South country lands of her father to her husband. But he was himself attainted of treason (1478) and executed. Edward, his son, received his lands back, by special favour of the King, but in 1499 he was executed for treason. All his estates came to the Crown, and many of them remained royal lands from

and squires alone, beside lesser men; and the Earl of Warwick had 1000 *men, beside his own household.*

* *In* 1541 *Thomas Fiennes, ninth Lord Dacre, killed a man in an affray at night. He was found guilty of murder. He was well known, and liked, at Court. But Henry VIII. refused to pardon him, and he was executed at Tyburn within two months of the murder.*

† *The other daughter, Anne, married Edward (Prince of Wales), who was killed in* 1471; *she married, secondly, Richard III. Thus her half of the Neville lands came to the Crown.*

this time onwards. But some—the old inheritance of the Earls of Salisbury—were given back by Henry VIII. to Edward's sister, Margaret, who became Countess of Salisbury. Yet, when her son Henry was executed for treason in 1539, and she herself was beheaded in 1541, all her estates were forfeited, and this time finally, to the Crown. Thus fell the last of the great Neville family. In similar ways, other great estates were forfeited to the Crown.*

Some of the old families had actually spent so much on their households, that their sixteenth-century descendants were really poor. John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, entertained Henry VII. among scores of liveried servants. He was raising money to pay them by borrowing on the *future* rents of his estates. Henry's watchful eye saw the liveried servants running hither and thither by the score. He said nothing; but he was well aware that his laws against livery were being broken. Just as he was leaving, he said to the Earl, "My lord, I thank you for my entertainment. But my attorney must speak with you." Then, after the royal visit, the Earl had to pay a great fine in ready money to the Star Chamber. So after his death, when his nephew became Earl, the latter had hardly any money at all. Cardinal Wolsey, a family friend, decided that there was only one possible course for the young Earl. He must live cheaply with his father-in-law, with twenty servants only, and his Countess must have but three. No longer could the Earl of Oxford maltreat his neighbours, and defy the officials of the King.

While the older nobility was sinking, the Tudor sovereigns were creating a new nobility from their courtiers and their

* *Two Dukes of Buckingham, father and son, were executed as traitors in* 1483 *and* 1521 *respectively. The lands of the family passed into the hands of the King, and remained in his possession.*

officials. Henry VIII. was able to endow these "new" men with lands. He had the great forfeited estates mentioned above. After 1536 he had the wide monastic lands. Besides, the Tudor sovereigns governed more strictly and completely than the earlier kings had done. Hence they had new posts in the Government service to give away.*

The new nobles were either courtiers or officials. The sort of courtier who pleased Henry VIII. or Elizabeth, intelligent as these sovereigns were, was a man of keen and educated wit, of bodily grace, and skill in dancing and hunting. Such a man resembled "The Courtier," sketched by Baldassarre Castiglione, an Italian, in his book of that name.† He described how a group of Italian men and women of rank debated the question: What ought the ideal courtier to be like? One suggested one thing, one another. What is a really accomplished and virtuous man like? Where is he to be found? If anywhere, then at Court, they say, and one by one each adds a touch to the description of him.

"I will have that our Courtier be a gentleman borne. . . . I judge the principal profession of a courtier ought to be in feats of arms, the which above all I will have him to practise, and to be known among others for his hardiness. . . . Hunting is one of many other exercises, for it hath a certain likeness to war, and truly a pastime for great men. . . . And to avoid envy and to keep company pleasantly with everyman, let him do whatsoever other men do, who decline not at any time from commendable deeds. . . . Our courtier shall in everything have a good grace, and especially in speaking, and he shall speak with a good voice, shrill, clear, sweet, well framed with a prompt pronunciation and with fit manners and gestures. But all these things were vain if the sentences [*i.e.* meanings] expressed by the words should not be fair, witty, subtle, fine, and grave, according to the matter. That therefore which is the principal matter, and necessary for a Courtier

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* *For instance, when the monasteries were dissolved, a new court was set up to manage the lands. This court was called the Court of Augmentations. To be its head was very lucrative.*

† *Written between* 1508 *and* 1516. *The extract which follows is taken from the English translation made in* 1552–54 *by Thomas Hoby, a young English courtier, to please Lady Northampton, the wife of William Parr, Lord Northampton, a very successful courtier.*

to speak and write well, I believe, is knowledge. . . . I am not pleased with the Courtier if he be not a musician, and have skill on sundry instruments. . . . The final end of a Courtier, whereto all his good qualities and conditions tend, is to become a teacher of his Prince, inclining him to virtuous practices."

There was something of this Courtier in Cardinal Wolsey (the first and last teacher of Henry VIII.), something in Sir Thomas More, and some points of him in Sir Walter Raleigh, others in William Cecil.

Many men were rising to fortune by the favour of the

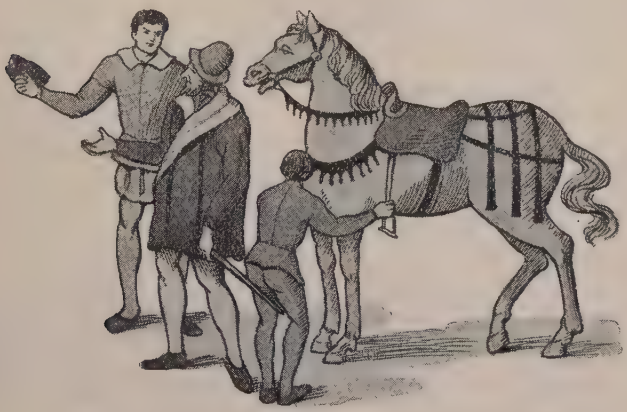

Fig. 7.—Nobleman, Squire, and Page, about 1545.

King. Anne Boleyn's father became Earl of Wiltshire, her brother Viscount Rochford. Jane Seymour's brother became Earl of Hertford (1537) and Duke of Somerset (1547); Sir William Parr, brother of Katharine Parr, became Earl of Essex (1543), Marquess of Northampton (1547). Queen Elizabeth made Lord Ambrose Dudley Earl of Warwick, and Lord Robert Dudley, his brother, Earl of Leicester. These men, and others of their class, received their lands from the Sovereign. Compared with those which the Nevilles or the Butlers had held in the fifteenth century, their estates were

narrow indeed. Moreover, the Sovereign's anger was much to be dreaded; the King could cause the downfall and ruin of a new nobleman, just as the royal favour had created his prosperity. Lord Rochford was executed in 1536, Thomas Cromwell was made Earl of Essex on April 17, 1540, and executed on July 28. Such lords as these were not dangerous to the Crown.

Still less dangerous was the other section of the new nobility, composed of officials. Such a man was Lord Lisle, in origin John Dudley, grandson of a simple country gentleman, living near Arundel, in Sussex. In the early days of Henry VII.'s reign this gentleman had sent his son Edmund to London to study law. Then came rapid successes, first as a law student, then as a lawyer, and at last Edmund Dudley, not much over twenty, was employed by the King. Then the success became greater. Edmund Dudley was made a Privy Councillor; and a curious career opened before him; he became confidential adviser of Henry VII. in his money matters, which lay very close to Henry's heart. Dudley had found out in how many little, overlooked ways men were breaking old, half-forgotten laws, and he kept accounts between himself and the King of all the money got by fining men for such offences. Gradually he became well known, and then hated by all England. No sooner was Henry VIII. King, than Dudley was executed on Tower Hill, on a groundless charge of treason (1510). The lands which he had bought were forfeit to the Crown. His little son, John, about nine years old, was the sufferer. But in 1513 Parliament allowed him to succeed to his father's possessions. The little boy was now well-to-do. He was educated well, and sent to fight under the Duke of Suffolk in France. There King Henry noticed him, and at twenty-one he was made Master of the Armoury at the Tower; the armoury was close by the room where

Dudley's father had spent the last days of his life. Dudley was promoted from office to office, and when, in 1542, he was appointed as Warden of the Scottish Marches, he was created Lord Lisle. He next became Earl of Warwick (1547), but it is as Duke of Northumberland (1551) that he is famous, as the father-in-law of Lady Jane Grey, who was forced by him to play the part of a claimant to the Crown.

Northumberland was almost the only man among the promoted officials who troubled the peace of the country. The rest had other interests. Mostly "men of mean beginnings," they showed great anxiety to make fortunes, especially under Henry VIII. Such men were Lord Rich, Lord Audley, Thomas Cromwell Earl of Essex. The last-named was the King's Secretary and Vicar-General, the two first had been royal law officers. Thomas Audley was made Lord Chancellor in January, 1533. A few years later he wrote to Cromwell, the King's Secretary, to ask for a grant of Abbey lands. He complained—

> "Never had a Chancellor so little to live by! I have not even £40 a year in land of my own. Else would I spend it willingly for the King's service. . . . And if a Chancellor of England, when he dieth, hath not 200 marks worth [£133 6*s.* 8*d.*] of land, it is to be noted! when a merchant, and one of the law, will not be so satisfied." [*I.e.* when a merchant or lawyer who left so little would think himself a failure.]

But when Audley died, he owned the lands of a great monastery in and around Saffron Walden (Essex), also abbey lands in and round Colchester, all the lands of Tiltey Abbey, in Essex, the manors of Woodham Ferrars and Great Tey, the rector's tithes of five parishes, and the right to appoint the five vicars—all property of divers dissolved abbeys and priories. Men like Audley would never oppose the Sovereign. In Queen Elizabeth's days, the officials carried their devotion to the Sovereign much further. They actually often paid the Queen's debts from their own purses, without waiting for

the Lord Treasurer's order. Walsingham nearly ruined himself in this way. William Cecil Lord Burghley died comparatively poor.* Men so devoted never rebelled against the Queen. The best of them opposed her sometimes in her own interest, and they did this very firmly, though very apologetically. Once Cecil disagreed with the Queen. He would not change his opinion, and he even asked to be excused from giving any orders or taking any part in business of which he did not approve. But he wrote—

"It may please your most excellent Majesty—with a sorrowful heart and watery eyes, I, your poor servant and most lowly subject, beseech your Majesty to pardon this my lowly suit, that considering the proceeding in this matter . . . doth not content your Majesty, and that I cannot with my own conscience give any contrary advise, I may . . . be spared to meddle therein, [*i.e.* may not have to do anything in the affair]. And as for any other service, though it were in your Mojesty's kitchen or garden, from the bottom of my heart I am ready, without respect of estimation [reputation] wealth or ease, to do your Majesty's commandments to my life's end."

Cecil and his colleagues were men in whom the new education † and their experience of life had produced a real belief that the Queen's Government stood for the public good. These men could not be dangerous to the Crown or to the public peace.

Among the untitled gentry, too, changes were occurring. The old families were still living in their ancient manor houses, upon the lands which had been familiar to their ancestors for many generations. But from the end of the fifteenth century, here and there, to the surprise and displeasure of country people high and low, new families began to take the place of

* *He left* £11,000 *in money and lands worth* £2,000. *But he had inherited some of these lands. John Gresham, uncle of Sir Thomas Gresham, the great merchant, was able to lend* £40,000 *to the Crown in* 1548; *even Robert Thorne, a merchant in Henry VIII.'s days, left* £16,000.

† *See p.* 80.

the old. On a larger scale than ever before, a new class of person entered the ranks of the country gentry. In numbers far greater than heretofore,* merchants were rich enough to buy great estates. The cause of this was the great increase in English trade, both internal and foreign.† Moreover, just when the merchants were able to buy land, much of it was for sale. From 1536 onwards, the King had thousands of acres of monastic land. Thenceforward, the Sovereign was selling large estates to rich men, month by month and year by year.‡ Moreover, the extravagant life led by gentlemen who went much to Court often compelled heirs of old families to sell.§

In one small region of northern Hertfordshire, for example, these changes were felt. Tring lies in a gap in the Chiltern Hills, some distance south-west of Dunstable. Tring itself had always belonged to Faversham Abbey (Kent), and of course did so still in the year 1500. The monks' old bailiff looked after the place, for the non-resident lord. At the next little place, Pendley, the lord, Sir Robert Whittinghame, was often resident, greatly to the distress of the people. Pendley had belonged to Sir Robert's mother before him, and in her day it had been a little place of some thirteen homesteads, besides cottages of craftsmen. But Sir Robert, young and active, meant to make money out of his land in the new way. First he tried to get as much land as he could for corn growing.¶

* *Often in previous centuries individual merchants* (e.g. *Wm. de la Pole*) *had been rich enough to do this. But now in the sixteenth century it was no longer a question of an outstanding individual here and there, but of many and many a merchant, generally throughout southern England.*

† *See Chaps. VII. and VIII.*

‡ *Prosperous freeholders, too, were often able to buy smaller parts of monastic estates. In some cases they added to their lands so much that they rose and took their place in the humblest rank of the gentry.*

§ "*The Yorkshire Tragedy*," *a play written between* 1605 *and* 1608, *turns upon the ruin of a Yorkshire gentleman, Walter Calverley, by his gambling. It was founded on a real story.*

¶ *See p.* 43.

Before 1448 he ploughed up half-acre strips belonging to his copyholders, and took them for his own. He took two holdings which had been let out to villein tenants, and refused to grant them out again,* though the villagers still called them "Richardyn's" and "Bunstreux," after former owners. Then as years went on, Sir Robert decided that sheep, after all, were most profitable. One by one, he turned all his tenants out. In 1506 men said they could remember the time when thirteen ploughs went afield from tenants' homesteads; now, the calls of Sir Robert's shepherds, the barking of his dogs and the bleating of his sheep were the only sounds across the Pendley pastures. No doubt there were men who cursed Sir Robert, and the fine new house he had built, "there as the town sometime stood." In this house Sir Robert's only child, Margaret, grew up. The neighbouring villages of Wheathampstead and Aldenham belonged to Westminster Abbey. In them life went on unaltered. De la Mers manor, near by, had passed from the De la Mers to the Carews, and through the heiress of the Carews eventually to Sir John Boteler, in an unbroken descent. So, too, the manor of Aldbury had gone from father to son or daughter ever since 1309. Thus in 1500 this little group of villages belonged either to the great monasteries or to old Hertfordshire families.

But by 1550 almost all had changed hands. Now Tring belonged to the King. Sometimes he let one man live there for a few years, sometimes another. These temporary tenants hardly counted in the lives of the country people. Wheathampstead and Aldenham, too, had come to the Crown when Abbot Boston surrendered Westminster in January, 1540. But by 1550 Aldenham belonged to the Crown no longer. It had been sold. Not far from Aldenham there had stood a

* *Cf. p.* 44.

monastery at Ashridge,* and among its monks was a certain Joseph Stepney. Apparently he belonged to a wealthy family in London. Perhaps he spoke to Ralph Stepney, a London citizen, about the valuable lands in his neighbourhood, for in 1546 Ralph offered the King £980 for the estate of Aldenham. He removed his family to Aldenham, and the villagers had to get accustomed to a lord living amongst them, and, moreover, to a lord with a counting-house interest in money, and London speech and ways. At men of Stepney's class other men gibed and jeered. Dean Crowley, speaking straight to successful merchants, wrote seriously in 1550 †—

"Apply thy trade as I have told
To the prófyt of thy contréy,
And then thou maisté e'er be bolde [so that thou may'st be the more
That thy Lord God wil guide thy wai. certain]

"And let thy sonnes every chone [one]
Be bounde prentise yeres nine or ten
To learn some art to lyve upon
For why should they be gentelmen ?"

Stepney's eldest son did become a gentleman, the squire of Aldenham. Meantime, at Pendley, too, a new lord had appeared. While Sir Robert Wittinghame had been pressing on with sheep farming, a certain London mercer, Ralph Verney, had been piling up his gains. At last, in 1465, he became Lord Mayor. He was knighted by Edward IV., whom he had always loved and supported. As he grew rich, Sir Ralph began to think of an estate. Land was the only thing that a man could buy that would give his family a perpetual support. For there were no banks and no companies, into which men could put money in return for interest, as they do now.‡ So Sir Ralph began to buy land. He bought an

* *The monks of Ashridge belonged to the grey-clad order of "Bonhommes"; they surrendered in* 1539.

† *Crowley, "Select Works," Eng. Dialect Society.*

‡ *See p.* 155.

estate near Aylesbury. It was called Middle Claydon. He bought it from Sir William de la Zouche, sixth Lord de la Zouche, of Harringworth. Meantime Sir Ralph's son was old enough to marry, and the wife chosen for him was Margaret Whittinghame, the heiress of Sir Robert. She brought her husband Pendley, and other estates. By 1550 several generations of Verneys had lived and died at Pendley Place. They had married into neighbouring families. They had been Justices of the Peace. The present owner [1550] Edmund Verney was sitting in Parliament as a Knight of the Shire for Bucks. Yet the Babingtons of Albury and the Botelers of Delamers must have regarded them still as new neighbours. Even in this little corner of Herts and Bucks, the gentry were representative both of the old stocks and the new.

The gentry of England had always been people of the countryside, living permanently in villages. As yet, they did not even go up to London regularly for any part of the year. The gentleman had always led an open-air life. He had always ridden or walked out to the common field, to see how his wheat was doing, and to visit his sheep, nibbling upon the fallow field, or to his barns, or to the harvest field, to pick out the tithe-sheaves for the priest. The new way of farming land and managing an estate * meant work for the master. As Lord of the Manor, he knew all about the petty law business of the Manor Court, and the final decisions as to fines and leases rested with him. Besides, he was beginning to farm for the market, and had to give great attention to his fields and stock. In the " Boke of Husbandrie " [1523] John Fitzherbert wrote—

" A short information for a young gentleman that intendeth to thrive. . . . I will advise him to rise betimes in the morning, and go about his closes [*i.e.* enclosures], pastures, and fields [*i.e.* open arable],

* *See Chap. III.*

and specially by the Hedges, and so have in his purse a pair of tables [tablets] and when he seeth anything that wolde be amended . . . then let him write it down. . . . And when he cometh home to dinner, supper, or at night, then let him call his bayly [bailiff] or head servant, and so show him the defaults that they may be shortly amended, and when it is amended, then let him put it out of his tables. . . . This used I to do 10 or 12 years or more, . . . and if he cannot write, let him nick the defaults upon a stick."

The young gentleman, and the old one too, had to be out in all weathers, had to know which beasts were in which field, what herds flourished in which pasture; he had to know his land and his stock thus minutely, if he was to farm as Fitzherbert wished.

Best of all were the long hours spent in hunting or hawking. From the hawk's first training onwards, the gentleman exulted in every soaring flight and deadly swoop of his pet bird. His servants tended the bird even from the egg; and then came the day of the breaking-in. In a very popular book, the following instructions were given—

"When your hawke is ready to fle [fly] to the pertryche [partridge], ye must take a pertryche in youre bagge and goo in to the felde; and lete your spanyels finde a Covy of pertryches. And whan they ben up, and begyn to scatre [scatter], ye must have markers to marke some of theym. And thenne cowple up your houndes; whan ye have so doon, lete some felow of yours prevely take the pertryche out of your bagge, and tye it by the legge . . . and caste it up as hyghe as he can. And yf your hawke, seesyth [seizeth] the pertryche above, yive [give] her a rewarde. . . . And goo, after that, by laysur [leisurely] to the pertryche that ben marked. Yf ye have a chastysyd [chastised] hound that is a retryver, uncouple him and noo moo of your houndys. And goo to a syngler [single] pertryche of the covy so sparceyed [scattered] and be as nyghe as ye can to the rysynge thereof." *

Country gentlemen bought the book from which this description is taken. It appeared in 1486, and was reprinted again and again. For it told how to hawk, how to fish, how to hunt the stag, the boar, and the hare, to make the fields ring

* *The book was called the "Boke of St. Albans." It was first printed in* 1486 *by the Schoolmaster of St. Albans* (*see p.* 15). *The sections on Hawking and Hunting were taken from an earlier fifteenth-century treatise, written, perhaps, by a lady, Dame Juliana Berners.*

as you urged on your dogs with "So ho! So ho!" or called them back with "Here how amy."

FIG. 8.—Queen Elizabeth hawking. The hawk is just striking down a heron. The Queen's servants and page are wearing the royal badge, the Tudor Rose.

English gentlemen had lived in this way for a long time. Now old customs were changing. All the violence and intriguing of the fifteenth century were becoming much less

possible. Gentlemen needed the protection of some great lord no longer. They themselves could no longer threaten and illtreat their neighbours with impunity.

Yet their lives were becoming fuller, not emptier. This

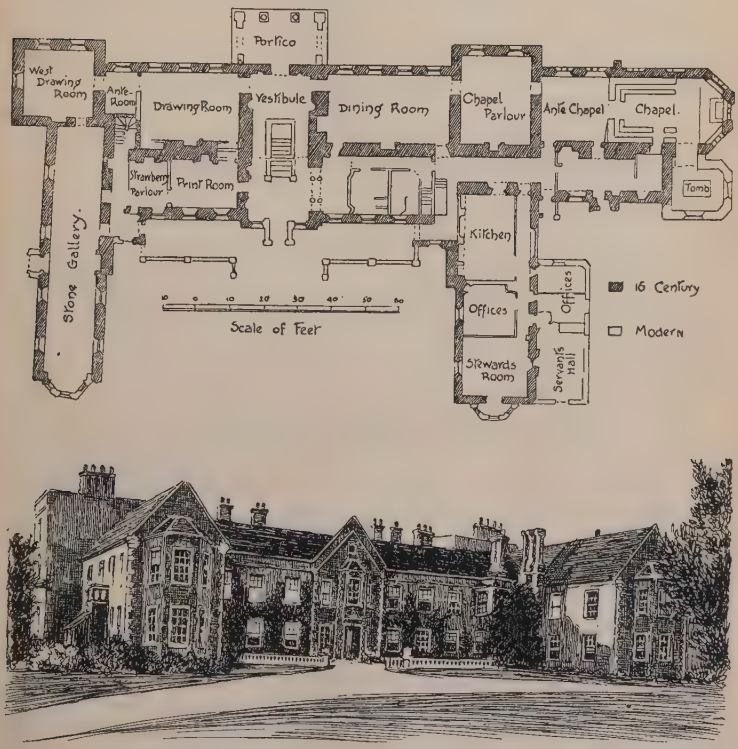

FIG. 9.—The Vyne, near Basingstoke, Hants, as it is to-day. Built by Sir William Sandys, between 1496 and 1510.

was because new occupations and interests were springing up. First, many gentlemen were very busy building new houses for themselves. For example, a courtier of Henry VIII., Sir William Sandys, determined to have a new home. He pulled

down his old house, called "the Vyne" (near Basingstoke, Hants). He chose a new site, in a pretty, sheltered position. He did not try to find a defensible one. The house was built of small deep-red bricks. It has mellowed now to a most beautiful colour. The main entrance stood in the very middle of the house front, on its northern side. One approached the entrance through a great courtyard, whose sides contained servants' bedrooms and stores and offices. The real dwelling place consisted of the long front block [see plan] with two wings, one at either end, stretching south. Entering, one came into a large vestibule. Oaken doors led to left and to right. To the left, was the great dining chamber. It was panelled in oak, carved in patterns. Each boss in the pattern was gilded like a star, and so people called this room "the starred parlour." Its large windows looked on to the garden, in which grew the flowers which had long been known in England—lilies, roses, and violets, marigolds, marjoram and lavender and southern-wood, pinks and pansies and columbines.*

The great parlour had a chimney and chimney-piece, too, in the new fashion, and a plastered ceiling. Here Sir William and his family and his guests only had their meals; the servants ate in their own quarters; and this, too, was a new fashion as yet. The dining-room opened into a little panelled parlour, which led in turn to the chapel. The latter is still panelled in oak,with beautiful seats like the stalls in a cathedral, left just as they were when Sir William and Lady Sandys used to rustle into them and sit and kneel there at the daily Mass.

On the right hand of the vestibule was the "new chamber," and one or two other parlours beyond it, occupying the wing

* *It was not until the middle of the century, as Harrison tells us, that strange seeds were imported, and new flowers raised, such as the Tamarisk, the Tulip, and the Damask Rose. See J. Parkinson* (*b.* 1567), "*Paradisus.*"

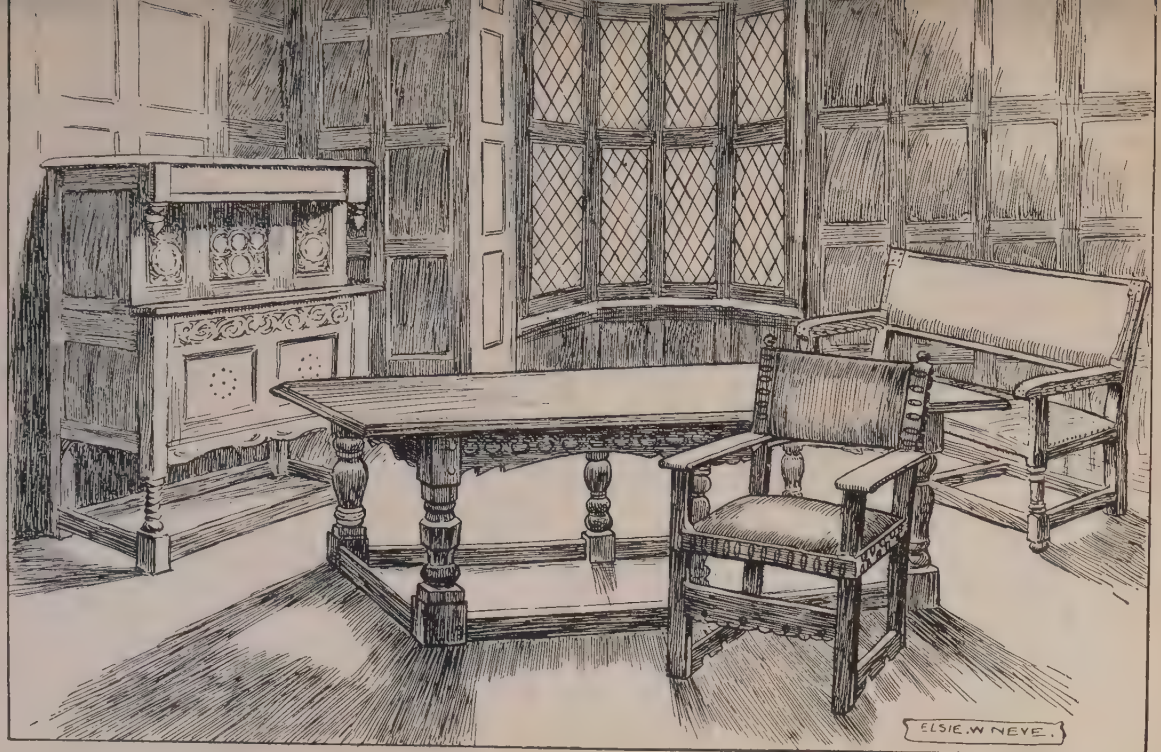

FIG. 10.—Pieces of Tudor furniture. 1. Court cupboard, or buffet. 2. Padded settee. 3. Standing table. 4. Armchair.

upon this side was the stone gallery, a long, narrow, beautiful room, with windows looking out on to the gardens, designed for men to pace up and down, to hold long, deep talks, for courtiers and ladies to play indoor games, for dancing or for music. The whole house, with oak gallery above the stone gallery, the library, the bedrooms, was planned for a very varied life. It separated the servants from the gentry. It allowed for privacy; it gave rooms for people who felt sociable. It allowed for people who wanted to read, or to have music. In these ways it represented the New Spirit.

Throughout the sixteenth century gentlemen were employed by the Crown as Justices of the Peace. This it was which altered the whole relation of the gentleman to his neighbours. This it was which caused the respect and dread in which the Elizabethan gentry were held. In 1600 Lambarde, a Kentishman, wrote: "The people think it their greatest good or hurt to be under good or evil justices."

The Justices of the Peace were a body of gentlemen, chosen for each shire nominally by the King, really by the Lord Chancellor, to keep the peace. They had been appointed first in 1327. The work was heavy; it was unpaid. But the power of a justice was great. To keep the King's peace meant to prevent breaches of it; to arrest those who broke it; * to punish lesser offenders, and to accuse, or "indict," and finally to try greater offenders and punish them. In the fifteenth century the justices had been worse than useless, for they had only sided with one great man or another, and only acted against his enemies and their own. Henry VII. determined that they should do their work properly. He persuaded

* *Offences against the peace included treason, murder, burglary, robbery, arson, riot, assault, kidnapping, theft, and petty larceny* [*theft of something worth less than* 12*d.*] *and lesser offences, such as drunkenness and fighting. The first five were called "felonies." Justices had power to act in such cases under a great many different Acts.*

Parliament to enact that if any man were wronged by a justice, he should complain to the King's judges; if they failed to hear, he should complain to the King, who would "send for the said justices, to know the cause why his subjects be not eased, and his laws executed." This meant that the justices would find themselves summoned before the Star Chamber.

Then Henry VII. and Henry VIII. and Elizabeth increased the number of the justices.* In 1598, within three or four miles round Bishops Stortford (Herts) there was Mr. Bowser at Stansted, Mr. Barrington at Barrington Hall, and at Benfield Bury, Mr. Hubberd, a London lawyer who had just bought the estate from the poverty-stricken Earl of Oxford.† In case of need, the village constables of the villages near by could easily get to one or other of these gentlemen.

In some cases Mr. Bowser, or any other single justice, could act alone. He could do so in preventing breaches of the peace. In August, 1588, in a village near Stansted while the farmers were getting in their corn, Goodman Dellowe quarrelled with Goodman West. West was frightened. In the evening he trudged to Stansted, to Mr. Bowser's house. The latter heard the whole story, and, when West had gone, he took his goose-quill pen and wrote in his large, rapid handwriting—

"Goodman Dellowe, the goodman West hath been with me and required to have the peace secured against you, the which he is content to await until Friday next. These [letters] are therefore to pray you that you do come to Stansted . . . on Friday next, there to speak with me and Mr. Hubberd so that we may take some good order between you, that the peace may not be broken and in the meantime that you take heed that either yourself nor none of your workmen and servants do break the peace, and if you fail so to do then know that we shall grant the peace

* *In* 1442, *in the West Riding there were only* 18 *justices, in* 1542, 72. *In Essex there were* 19 *in* 1442, *and* 45 *in* 1542. *But in thinly-peopled districts the justices were miles apart. This was the case in Lancashire even in the eighteenth century.* (*See Scott, "Rob Roy"; cf. Fielding, "Tom Jones."*)

† *See p.* 61.

against you [*i.e.* order the constable to arrest you] and in the meantime I do wish that you will let the corn stand upon the said ground. By your friend, Richard Bowser."

By the Friday Dellowe had decided to keep the peace, and had persuaded two friends to stand surety that he would do so. So they entered Mr. Bowser's parlour and found him there with the keen lawyer, Mr. Hubberd.* From them Dellowe got sharp speeches, telling him how displeasing his conduct was to them and to the Queen. Then the browbeaten Dellowe signed a deed, promising to pay a large sum if he broke the peace ; for this his friends " stood surety " ; this meant that if Dellowe broke the peace his friends must pay the money. In this way justices actually prevented breaches of good order.

But if the peace were already broken the justice had to cause the arrest of the guilty one. To arrest him was the essential thing which the King's Sheriff had so often failed to do, through fear, or by favour, or simply through being too far away. If the justice saw men or women fighting, or drunk, or heard them abusing people, he had them put in the stocks. Thus he punished small offences straight away. If a greater outrage had been committed—

" then shall the justice boldly proceed, taking with him sufficient power of the country [*i.e.* men whom he called to help him in the King's name] at his discretion . . . as well for the arresting as for the removing of such. . . . " †

If he heard of a riot in progress, he rode at once to the scene—

" such as he findeth riotously assembled and armed, he may arrest to find surety, and may commit to ward [*i.e.* prison] if they refuse, and may take their weapons from them . . . so that one justice may do somewhat to prevent a riot before it be done, or for the stay of it while it be in doing, but nothing to punish it . . . when done."

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* *Mr. Bowser could legally have acted alone. But then he would have had to look up the proper forms in his books. Probably Mr. Bowser felt safer if he had the trained assistance of the lawyer-justice.*

† *First, the justice either went to see evidence of the outrage, or received the sworn verdict of twelve men of the neighbourhood that the outrage had been committed.*

To punish, in all these cases, was the work of all the justices of the shire. For this purpose they assembled, usually at the county town, once in three months, and held the "Quarter Sessions of the Peace."

In addition to all this work, the Tudor Sovereigns gave the justices in Quarter Sessions more and more practical work to do. They had to look after the bridges and roads of their shire. They had to see that the county prison was kept up. They had to see that market rules were kept, and they licensed pedlars. In fact they did administrative work of all sorts as the County Council does to-day.

Thus the gentry were now continually doing responsible work for the cause of order. The Lord Chancellor appointed the justices carefully. In 1587 he wished to be sure that he had suitable men. He asked each Bishop to report upon the justices in his see. The Bishop of Worcester wrote—

"Among the justices of Worcestershire, divers . . . be but superficial either for advice or for execution of any weighty affairs of the Council. [But others] truly do carry themselves modestly in the administration of justice, and are the principalest gentlemen of the shire, being at hand for all service, by reason of their residence in the same."

The Bishop wrote about individual justices—

"Sir J. Littleton. He is accounted wise.	*Estate in the Subsidy* Book*	£66 13 4
J. Pakington, Esq. A good wise gentleman	..	£50 0 0
T. Russell, Esq. Commended for forwardness in religion, not so for discretion	.. .. ..	£40 0 0
T. Knottsworth, Esq. Old and past service	..	£15 0 0

Master Tomkins of Hereford is fit to be a justice, for he is very well affected in religion, a good justiciar, [*i.e.* a man likely to give just judgments] of sufficient livelihood and convenient place of service."

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* *The Subsidy was a tax levied upon lands above a certain value, or upon goods. The Subsidy Book was the book in which all the assessments to this tax were recorded. Thus it showed what property each man was known to have. By law, justices must have £20 a year from their own lands. This rule was often broken. Yet the justices were chiefly chosen from the gentlemen of greater estate in the county.*

These reports show how much stress was laid on the character and opinions of each justice. The beliefs and aims of the average gentleman were changing. This change was due to two influences in particular. First, from about 1450 onwards, until the opening of the sixteenth century, Englishmen had experienced disorder and misrule caused by the weakness of the King; they now began to believe that the King ought to be as powerful as possible, so as to keep order.

The second new influence came into play much more gradually, and was strongest towards the end of the century. It was the influence of education. For the new business side of farming demanded reading, writing, and summing, from men who would thrive. After the Reformation, the English Bible and the English Church service gave the people something in English which they desired greatly to read. Thus, especially after 1558—

"[country people] wished their children to read the Common Prayer at Church, to set down common prices at market, to write a letter, to set down their marriage day, and to make their wills when they are sick."

Both before and after the Reformation, reading English, and writing, and adding and subtracting, were learnt by tenants' sons and squires' sons from the parson. It was in a higher sort of school, the "grammar" * school that boys learnt to read Latin. Some such schools had existed in every county since earlier days. Some had been kept up by monasteries, others by parishes, others had been founded by private people. But since about the middle of the fifteenth century, under the impulse of the New Learning, more men had been giving land and money to support schools. Many men wished their children to learn the old, pure Latin, and perhaps even Greek. Some old grammar schools came to an end in

* *So called because Latin grammar was taught there.*

Fig. 11.—The Grammar School, Stratford-on-Avon. The large desk is the seat in which the master sat. Each boy went up in turn to be heard his lesson. In the sixteenth century there was much less teaching of the class as a whole than there is now. This school existed in the fourteenth century; in the fifteenth, it was supported by the Gild of the Holy Cross, and the master was one of the priests who sang Mass for the gild. The gild built this room in 1426–27, at a cost of £9 18*s*. In 1548 gilds were dissolved by Act of Parliament, and many schools came to an end. But Edward VI. permitted this one to be kept up, and paid £10 a year to support it. In 1553, the Duke of Northumberland, whose lands lay in Warwickshire (see p. 64), prevailed on Edward to grant the school and all its old lands to the town again. Shakespeare's father helped to manage it, as one of the elected town officials, and Shakespeare attended it, from about 1572 to 1579 or 1580, and was taught in this room.

Edward VI.'s reign, because they had been endowed as charities, and were taught by chantry priests, and the chantries were now broken up. But the King allowed some schools, such as the school at Stratford-on-Avon, to continue. As time went on, even quite simple people began to care more and more about education. At Moulton, near Spalding (Lincs.), in 1560, lived John Horrox, steward to a neighbouring gentleman, Sir John Harrington. Horrox lived in a snug house, and had copyhold land bringing in about £30 a year. Old and childless, he set his heart upon founding a school, "to the setting forth of God's glory and the good of my country," he said. Within a year of his death, his house had become the schoolhouse, and re-echoed to the voice of Master Bellson, the master, catechising and dictating, the murmuring of the boys over lessons, and the swishing sound of the birch. Near by, at Stamford,* the little old school had been re-endowed in 1532 by a merchant of the staple. Before 1600 there were nineteen other grammar schools in the county. Thenceforward no Lincolnshire gentleman was too far from a school to send his sons as weekly boarders.†

The life at the grammar school was very vigorous and hard. School began at Moulton with prayers at 6 a.m. in summer, and at 7 a.m. in winter, and ended with prayers at half-past five in summer, and at 4 p.m. in winter. The boys could all read and write when they entered; and so now they had to work away at Latin. The old way of teaching Latin had been simply to change an English word into its Latin equivalent, word for word, throughout an English sentence. Now, however, the boys had to study the order in

* *William Cecil, son of Master Cecil of Burleigh in Stamford parish (Northants), later the Secretary of State, was a pupil at the time of the re-endowment. He left for Cambridge three years after.*

† *At Moulton some boys boarded with the master, others with the parents of one of the boys; they were gentlepeople living in Spalding.*

which Romans had really put their words, and try to copy them. They began to have more interesting Latin books to read, such as Ovid's tales and Cæsar's stories of his wars. In 1608 there were about forty-five boys. They worked in six classes. In the top one there were only Gilbert Allen, Thomas Grimald, and Anthony Worlsey. These boys were probably about sixteen or seventeen years of age, and were perhaps preparing for Cambridge. They were very important personages, for the master appointed two monitors each week, "to take note of all faults," and every Friday the master "kept corrections," that is punished the offenders. Probably the three biggest boys were monitors most often. They had to keep an eye open on the others in school and out; for the school statute ran :—

"All the scholars shall reverently and orderly behave themselves, not only towards their master, but towards all sorts of men. Therefore, if any one of them play, talk, fight, rail, or otherwise hurt or molest any of their fellows or in the streets shall pass by any aged or honest man not uncovered [*i.e.* without taking their caps off], or take the upper hand of him . . . and further, if a scholar dwell in Moulton, and do not attend the Master to Church (twice every Sunday) he shall be noted by the two monitors . . . and receive correction according to the quality of the offence."

So on Friday the work went on with some excitement, for the boys knew pretty well what was going to happen in the afternoon. On Saturday afternoon the master examined the boys in their catechisms, which they learnt in Latin, or, if they were far enough on, in Greek. One afternoon during the week was a half-holiday, that is, if the boys wrote a petition in Latin to the master, asking for one.

The value of the boy's school life was not only in its lively rough ways, its simpleness and companionship. New work was gradually coming into the schools, and the most important part of it was the reading of Greek. It was not until after 1558 that very many masters began to teach boys Greek. Before that date, only a teacher here and there knew

enough to teach it. In 1518, Colet had made the rule for his new school, St. Paul's, that the master must be learned in good Latin, and "in Greek if any such could be gotten." English printers had but little Greek type, and hardly printed any Greek books. Easy grammars were wanting.

But in Queen Mary's reign English people fled abroad to avoid the religious persecutions. In Switzerland and Germany they found Protestants printing Greek books, and actually reading the Gospels in the Greek language. The English felt that to know Greek brought the power to get closer to Christ's words than the English Gospels could do. When they came back to England in Elizabeth's reign, a vigorous teaching of Greek began. In county grammar schools young gentlemen were soon learning to read the Greek Gospels, and also to read Æsop's Fables, and then the plays of Aristophanes, and then Homer's own poetry and the tragedies of the great Greek dramatists.

It is true, no doubt, that many of the boys learnt "small Latin and less Greek," and that many middle-aged country gentlemen had forgotten all that they had learnt. Yet many looked on life with quicker interest, thought more accurately, wrote their own language better, and knew far more than their neighbours, because of their boyish labours at the grammar school. It was between the middle of the fifteenth and the end of the sixteenth century that the country gentlemen began to be an educated class. Growing richer, living in a more spacious setting, doing responsible public work, reading more books, singing, and hunting, playing, and dancing, they yet remained country people. It was to them that the ordinary country folk looked for rule and guidance. It was, indeed, true, as Lambarde wrote—

"[Countrymen] honoured learning as well in the parson, as in the schoolmaster, but chiefly in our Justices of the Peace, for under God and the King, they bear great sway in the County."

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Shakespeare ..	Henry VIII., Love's Labour's Lost, Merry Wives of Windsor	*Any Edition.*
Verney, F. P. and M. M.	Memoirs of the Verney Family, vol. i.	*Longmans.*
Cavendish ..	Life of Cardinal Wolsey	*Any Edition.*
Hume, M. ..	The Great Lord Burghley	*J. Nisbet & Co.*
Roper	Life of Sir Thomas More	*Chatto & Windus (King's Classics).*
Traill, H. B. ..	Social England	*Cassell & Co.*
Strickland, A. ..	Lives of the Queens of England	*Colburn.*
,,	Life of Queen Elizabeth	*J. M. Dent & Son. (Everyman Series).*
Merriman ..	Letters of T. Cromwell	,, ,,
Gotch, J.	Growth of the English House	*Batsford.*
Maitland, F. ..	Justice and Police ..	*Macmillan & Co.*
Bacon, F. ..	Essay on Gardens ..	*Any Edition.*
Ascham, R. ..	The School Master ..	*Cassell & Co., or Cambridge Univ. Press.*
Leach, A. F. ..	English Schools at the Reformation	*Methuen & Co.*
Robinson, F. S. ..	English Furniture ..	,,

CHAPTER V

TOWN LIFE UNDER THE TUDORS

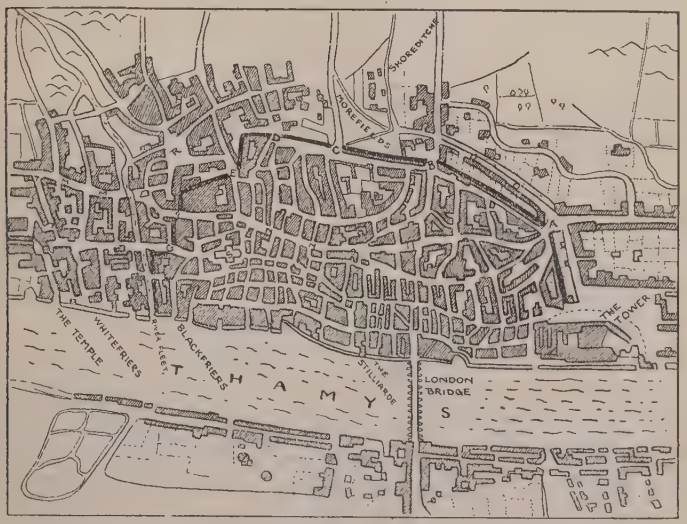
THROUGHOUT the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries English towns had hardly deserved to be called towns, in the modern sense. They were so small. In the sixteenth century, perhaps for the first time, one English city, London, grew great enough to compare with a modern town. By the year 1600, London had between 150,000 and 200,000 inhabitants.*

The great increase had been quick. Until the reign of Henry VIII., London had still been contained, more or less, within the old medieval walls. The first map of London was published in 1543. It showed the old city wall very clearly; but already it showed many buildings outside the walls. There were houses on both sides of Chancery Lane. Already a few gabled houses stood along Holborn; Smithfield was quite surrounded by houses. East of Smithfield there were no more houses until one came to Aldgate. Field and Common stretched to the edge of the city ditch, and on Moorfields people spread their washing to dry. At Aldgate, and along the Mile End Road into Essex, stood many houses; some looked on to Stepney Heath with its gorse and its archery butts, where the Londoners and the husbandmen of Stepney practised with bow and arrow on Sunday afternoons. Outside Tower Ditch, round St. Catharine's Church, was a

* "*Encyclopædia Brit.*" (1911). "*London,*" *Sect. IX. We cannot be quite sure of the figures, nor of its size in* 1500.

little town of riverside people, and their houses extended down to St. Catharine's Wharf and the Thames.

In 1560 another great map of London was made by Agas. On it the city wall is quite hard to find, for the girdle of houses outside it had become almost continuous. Between Smith-



MAP 4.—A Map of London, made by John Norden in 1598.

field and Cripplegate houses stood thick. Moorfields still lay open, but along its eastern edge, where Bishopsgate Street ran northwards, one gabled house now fronted another, all the way to Shoreditch. Along the city wall the ring of buildings ran right round to Aldgate, and scattered dwellings stood far out among the fields north and east. Such growth in twenty years amazed those who witnessed it. The Privy

Council thought it was unhealthy. In 1580 they tried to check it by forbidding any new building within three miles of the city wall. But on various pretexts people evaded the order; they continued to build and the growth went on.* The size of London impressed even foreigners and travelled men. An Italian, writing about 1548, said, "All English towns are put into the shade by London!" In 1598, a German traveller wrote enthusiastically—

> "This city, being very large of itself, has very extensive suburbs. . . . It is magnificently adorned with public buildings, and churches, of which there are above 120 parish churches!"

And Londoners felt strongly that their city was one of the wonders of the world for sightseers. It was also one of the most interesting places to live in.

Everything was exciting—the people pushing along the narrow streets, the various goods displayed outside the houses, the odours, the cries and songs that assailed the ears. The noise of a big city then was quite different from the noise of a great modern city, in which the roar of heavy traffic drowns every other sound. Then the prevailing notes were the tread and shuffle of many feet, the chatter of many voices, the cries of apprentices volleyed from either side of the street, the call of a hawker, offering you "Apples, pears, pippins," or voices singing at one house door, "Rushes, green rushes," and at another, "Any kitchen stuff have you, maids?" At your other ear some one cried, "Ballads! Ballads! the sweet Ballad of the Lincolnshire Bagpipes—Mine own sweet Willy is laid in his grave—But now he is dead and gone." Further down the street one heard faintly, "Have you any wood to cleave?" These cries, and many others, fell into sweet cadences which became traditional. Some cries were

* *See Map* 4. *In other towns, too, the same changes went on. The growth of suburbs, the filling in of the town ditch and the disappearance of walls.* *See below, p.* 102.

lengthened and developed into songs. The broomseller sang—

"New brooms, green brooms, will you buy any ?
Come maidens, come quickly, let me take a penny !
Have you any old boots, or any old shoon,
Pouchrings or buskins to *cope* [exchange] for new brooms ?
New brooms and green brooms, will you buy any ?
Come maidens, come quickly, let me take a penny ! " *

The ordinary government of the City provided many sights to draw old men from the fire, or even apprentices from their work. The commonest punishment for lesser offences was the pillory. It was interesting to see who was in the pillory, and to hear why he was there. One day it was a woman who had tried to poison her husband ; the next day she was whipped at a cart tail along the street ; the next week she was seen in the pillory again "for slandering." Another day it was a man who had sold strawberries in pottles half filled with fern. Even more interesting to the Londoner were the great official processions and entertainments of the City, such as the periodical muster of the craftsmen with their weapons before the Lord Mayor, the visit of the Lord Mayor and aldermen to St. Bartholomew's Fair in Smithfield in August, and the autumn visit of the newly elected mayor and sheriffs to Westminster Palace, whither they went in their barges to take the oath of allegiance. On such occasions the craftsman in his livery might attend his craftwardens himself. Even if he did not, he would see many people whom he knew, his wardens and the aldermen of his district, riding behind the Lord Mayor.

In those days, too, the lives of rich men gave many noble sights to their neighbours. When the marriage company of a rich citizen, or the funeral of an alderman, went along the street, all heads popped out of the windows and down went

* *Within living memory an old broommaker sang a similar song in the streets of Newcastle-on-Tyne.*

the tools. A tailor and undertaker called Henry Machyn, who lived near Queenhithe, described in his Diary every funeral of his neighbourhood—

"12 Aug. (1558) at Midnight died good Master Machyll, Altherman of London, clothworker, and marchant of Muskovea * [*i.e.* Moscow], the which . . . was a good man to the poor. . . . If he had levyd, he had beyn mayre next yer. . . . 21 Aug. (he) was bered [*i.e.* buried] . . . and all the chyrch hanged with blake and armes [*i.e.* shields painted with coats of arms], and the street with blake and arms. . . and ther was my lord mayor and the Althermen and a hundred in blake . . . and a hundred poor men in . . . fryse [frieze] gowns."

The London citizen saw the Sovereign perform the great acts of State; and this not once in a way but continually. He saw foreign ambassadors land, and take their way to Court. He saw the Sovereign ride into the Tower, or out of it; he saw rebels' heads on London Bridge. Many a tragedy of the State was played before the Londoners. Sometimes the citizens took a humble part in the play. On October 14, 1549, the Duke of Somerset † was brought guarded to the Tower—

"the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs . . . and others sitting on their horses against Soper Lane, . . . and from Oldbourne [Holborn] Bridge to the Tower, certain aldermen or their deputies on horse back in every street with a number of householders standing with Bills ‡ as he passed."

Of all Englishmen it was only the Londoner who actually saw the acts of the Sovereign in this way. Life in London must have impressed men with the power and magnificence of the King. It must have given them almost a personal interest in the central government in which they had no direct share.

The indoor life of the citizen was becoming much more comfortable. Men's skill in building had increased. Great was the pride of the citizen who built a house like Sir Paul Pindar's (Fig. 23). First a foundation was laid of stone or

* *See Chap. VIII.* † *See Chap. IV.*

‡ *A combination of axe and spear, not unlike a halberd.*

brick, about two feet deep. On this builders laid horizontal beams, into which fitted uprights at the corners ; at intervals, too, along the horizontal beams rose upright posts ; and all these uprights bore the horizontal supports for the first floor.* Above the first storey projected a second, and often a third above that. In the steep roof the builder set one or two gables, and he planned their position and size so as to get a fine effect. Thus the wooden skeleton of the house was set up first. Then the wall-spaces were filled in with laths plastered over, or brick, or " wattle and daub "—interlaced boughs coated with clay.† Such houses had been built in England for several hundred years ; but Tudor builders were varying the old plans in several important ways. Fourteenth-century builders had put the most important rooms on the ground floor ; a ladder had led from a room below to another, placed box-like on top of it. But in the sixteenth century the first floor was gaining the importance which it retained until the end of the nineteenth century. In the sixteenth century builders could make large, light chambers upstairs because they could now build staircases. Indeed, a handsome staircase was becoming the centre of the house. It rose round a square well from one wide landing to another. The staircase had shallow steps and a heavy balustrade of oak or walnut, richly carved. From the first landing doors opened into rooms like those in Fig. 12. These rooms were much lighter than the older ones had been, for the new windows were large and the ceiling was sometimes coated with white plaster, wrought into patterns in relief, and

* *All the beams were fastened together with wooden pins that did not rust.*

† *At Hull, bricks were made in the tilery just outside the town and used a great deal. In Worcestershire, too, much brick was made and used. The filling-in material still depended entirely upon local resources. Plastered laths or " wattle and daub " were commonest.*

it reflected much light downwards. The walls of the chamber

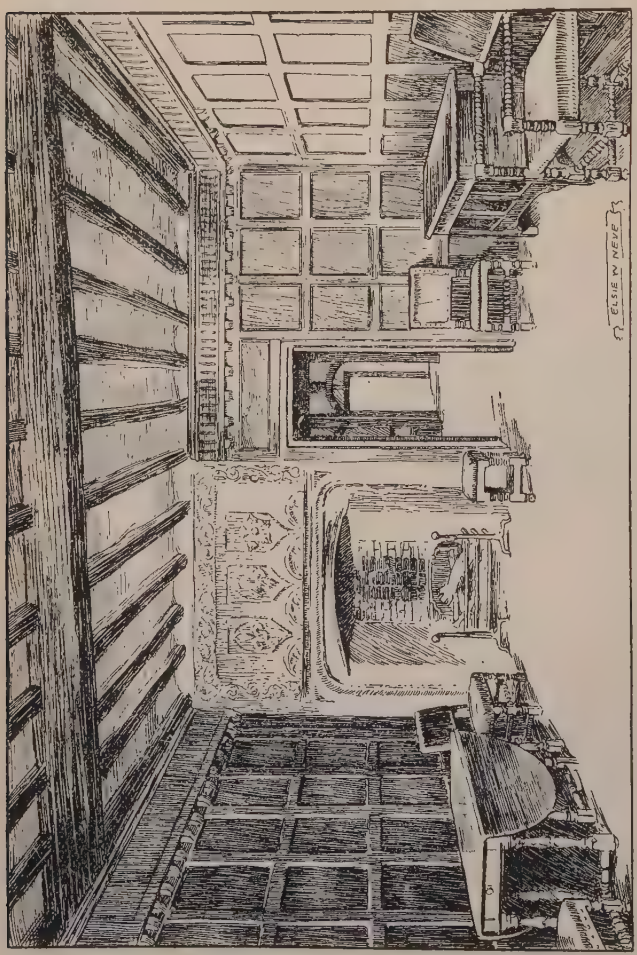


Fig. 12.—The Harvard House, Stratford-on-Avon. This house was built in 1596, by Thomas Rogers, an alderman of the town. Rogers' daughter married Robert Harvard, and their son left England for New England in 1637. He left his property to a college, which became the famous American University called "Harvard."

were wainscotted with wooden panels, carved with the "linen-fold" pattern or with coats-of-arms. The old fashion of

tapestry was still also used; many walls were hung with tapestry made in Worsted (Norfolk) or in Arras or some other Flemish town. In the living-room still stood the old trestle-table, settee and benches, black with age and shiny with use. The new oaken "buffet," or court cupboard [Fig. 10, No. 1], was very straight and square in its design, and carved. Upon it lay a strip of Turkey carpet, whose rich colours contrasted with cups and dishes of silver or of English pewter, and with the iridescent shades of one or two Venetian glasses.* The "padded settee" [No. 2] was also new, and so were the joint stools which the apprentices pulled to the table at meal times, while the master, or perhaps a guest, sat in the new padded armchair [No. 4]. All these things remained much cleaner than of old, for the chimney had been invented at last. In the fourteenth century the fire had smouldered from the hearthstone in the middle of the room up towards a hole in the roof, volleying smoke to left and right of it. In the fifteenth century builders had moved the hearthstone back against an outside wall, and made a hole above it through the wall. Then they had built a projecting hood of wood, stone or plaster, over the hearth. Even in the reign of James I., old men could remember fires arranged like this. But Tudor builders made a stone channel in the wall from the back of the hearth, under the hood. Thus the real chimney came into common use.† People liked such chimneys so much that in new houses they made them in several rooms. In winter, nearly all the smoke went up the chimney, and in summer, after the Easter cleaning, the housewives filled up the hearth with pots of flowers. Opening from the landing, too, was the best bedroom, and in it, the pride and

* *In less well-to-do houses, Delft pottery, English pewter, or Flemish stoneware, stood on the buffet.*

† *Real chimneys are found in a few medieval buildings.*

glory of the housewife, was the great new fourposter bedstead, with feather bed, blankets, sheets, bolster, pillow, and gorgeous counterpane embroidered by the mistress and her maids.

Down below in the shop, level with the street, the citizen toiled with his apprentices and journeymen until the break came at eleven, the dinner hour. Then on holidays, up went the shutters, and off went Master Gallipot the Apothecary, and Master Openwork the Haberdasher, with their apprentices and servants, and their wives too, with their dogs and a live drake, to Perilous Pond on Moorfields,* while the grocer and his wife and apprentice went off to Finsbury to see the play at the "Theater," † or at the "Curtain."‡

In size, business and wealth, London stood far ahead of any other English town, even further ahead than it had done in centuries gone by.§ For this there were two main reasons. First our foreign trade was increasing rapidly. But as yet there was no trade with America from the west coast of England to feed west coast ports, and for the Indian trade Antwerp was our main market. Trade with Russia and the Levant were in the hands of London merchants; for they only were rich enough to risk ships and cargoes so far away. For all these reasons the port of London was far more important than all the others put together.¶

"The wealth of the world is wafted to it by the Thames, swelled by the tide, and navigable to merchants' ships through a safe and deep channel for 60 miles."

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* *See* "*The Roaring Girl*," *by Middleton.*

† *See* "*The Knight of the Burning Pestle*," *by Beaumont and Fletcher.*

‡ *The first playhouses were the Theater* (1576) *on the edge of Finsbury Fields* (*at the site of the present Curtain Road*), *and the Curtain* (1577) *south of it. Later came the Globe in Southwark* (1599). *Many plays were acted not in a playhouse, but in some inn yard.*

§ *See Chaps. VI. and VII.*

¶ *The average customs for five years, to September,* 1601, *were: Newcastle,* £899; *Hull,* £2,337; *London,* £114,776. *For the year* 1612–1613 (*Imports and Exports together*) *they were: London,* £109,572; *All the other ports,* £38,501.

So wrote an Italian about 1548. Englishmen, too, noticed how trade had gone to London, and citizens of other towns grumbled. It was against them that Stow, the London chronicler, defended his own dear city—

"I have shortly to answer the accusation of those men which charge London with the . . . decay of many of the ancient cities . . . within the realm, by drawing from them to herself alone, say they, both all trade of traffic by sea, and the retailing of wares and exercise of manual arts also."

Here Stow refers also to the second and third causes of London's greatness. Londoners were busy selling to others all the goods brought to the Port. Thirdly, London craftsmen could buy and also make up the richest materials, and be practically sure that they could find customers for these expensive wares every day. Besides, some of the London crafts had obtained control over all men of their calling throughout England. The London craft of grocers had held from the King, since 1450, the right to inspect all spices and drugs on sale all over the kingdom. The London Goldsmiths had the right to examine goldsmith's work everywhere, and punish bad workmen. The London Skinners had the right to inspect all skins on sale in all English markets and fairs. The London pewterers had been given a similar right, to inspect all pewter ware, by Edward IV. in 1474.

All this tended to give the London craftsmen a character like that of George the Grocer in the *Knight of the Burning Pestle*—free and yet careful, full of pride in "the honor of his craft," ordering the players to go off the stage, and his apprentice to go on and act. Such a man enjoyed the life of London.

Very different was the life in a country town. Let us imagine that we are riding away with Leland, about 1540,

towards the low salt marshes and sleepy little estuary upon which stands Barnstaple.

"An eight miles by hilly ground, having much enclosure for pasture and corn. The town of Berdenestaple hath be waulled and the wall was in cumpace by estimation half a Myle. The names of the 4 gates by Est West North and South yet remain, and manifest tokens [*i.e.* visible remains] of them . . . . The Suburbs be now more than the Towne. The houses be of stone, as all houses in good Townes there about be." *

Country boroughs were still very small.† At Barnstaple, as in many other places, the suburbs were fast growing up.‡ For now it was safe to live outside the walls. Within the walls, in the narrow streets, there was still the old bustle, noise, crowding, the old smells, muckheaps and open gutters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ; and amidst all this citizens led interesting and prosperous lives. But the experience and outlook of the country townsman were unlike those of the Londoner. A Barnstaple man, Philip Wyott, kept a journal from 1586 to 1608. It lets us see what interested Mr. Philip Wyott.

"Little or no rain hath fallen this 6 or 8 weeks, whereby Dearth and Scarcity is to be looked for. . . . Victuals about this time very dear. . . . Townsmen cannot have corn for money . . . 400 bushels of rye arrived not above 80 bushels sold, wheat rose next market day to 9*s*. 110 fat oxen in the market on one day, the like never seen before on Friday before Easter !"

Besides the market Mr. Wyott haunted the riverside. He saw the ships go out over the bar with swelling sails ; he saw Sir Richard Grenfell's vessel go down with the tide,

* *In Evesham, Worcester, Gloucester, Hereford, Stratford-on-Avon, Sheffield, Doncaster, Leicester, and Loughborough and other boroughs, the houses were built of timber from the forests near by.*

† *Leland describes Torrington as "a great large town of 3 fair streets ;" Chester chiefly one street . . . there is besides a small street or two about the church.*

‡ *Worcester had "a fair suburb," Glo'ster 3 fair suburbs outside the gates, Northampton a fair suburb outside the south gates and another outside the west gate.* [*Leland.*]

he heard of prizes brought in, laden with "gold, and chains of gold, and civet," and with "hides, sugar, and ginger." Every now and then he noted the arrival of Mr. Chechester from his house in the village of Westcott; he recorded the death of old Mrs. Chechester of Braunton; for all these rural people and things were familiar and important to the townsman of Barnstaple. Indeed, the country town was the real centre of social life for the gentry all around. Yearly visits to London were not yet dreamed of.

Fig. 13.—Citizens of Portsmouth. (From a drawing made soon after 1545.) The young man is carrying a hood or hat, like those carried by the liverymen (see Fig. 16).

It was only once in a way that the Barnstaple citizen saw rich and great pageants such as passed the Londoner's door daily. Lord Bath had a great house, Tavistock Court, at Tavistock, not far from the town; and when Lady Bath died there was a funeral of the richest sort, with torches blazing, and mourners in the deepest black, waving banners, chanting and almsgiving. All the doings of the Earl and Countess interested the town. The Earl was a Justice of the Peace. The Earl and his lady dined with the mayor, and once

"the women [*i.e.* citizens' wives] this year were not bidden, wherefore there was much chattering among them."

Upon the mayor and aldermen, but especially upon the mayor, all eyes in the town were turned. For the mayor represented the Queen and her government to Mr. Wyott and his fellow-townsmen. Unlike the Londoner, they did

not see the Queen herself going to Parliament or to Whitehall. Wyott liked to see Mr. Mayor and the Maisters (Aldermen) attired all in scarlet gowns going out in state to meet the Lord Bishop of Exeter. At Leicester, in 1530, when the spring was wonderfully early, the Town Clerk wrote :

> " Be it had in mind that the 27th day of March . . . there was brought to Mr. Mayor hawthorn budded forth, bean flowers, and 2 columbell [columbine] flowers."

The mayor was almost symbolic of the town and its well-being. He must be prosperous, able to feed the mayor's servants, and do things handsomely. The Bishop of Wells wrote scornfully in 1574 about Wells—

> " The town hath no trade whereby to maintain a mayor. . . . The mayor that now is is not able to give his sergeants [servants] meat so they are constrained notwithstanding their attendance [on him] to seek their meat at home or elsewhere. . . . Next year they must either have a shoemaker or a baker to be their mayor ! "

On the other hand, at Barnstaple, Mr. Wyott was noting :

> " Mr. Mayor all this year at every court holden at the Gildhall kept a dinner for the alderman and others, not being bound thereto, but of his own liberality ! "

The importance of Mr. Mayor was partly new, and it arose from the following causes. The Elizabethan burgess had the old pride in his " burgess-ship," that is his right to share fully in the town government and in its pastures and woods, his right to carry on his trade or craft in his town, his share in all privileges, including freedom from toll in the town market. Not every man in an Elizabethan town shared these rights, but only those who held the burgess-ship, which they had gained by inherited right, by purchase or by apprenticeship to a burgess.

In a small town like Liverpool with its 140 burgesses, most of the citizens still went on attending the assembly or town court in the sixteenth century, much as they had done in the

fourteenth. It was in the town court that cases were tried and bye-laws made and burgesses admitted. In the little town of Woodstock all the burgesses actually insisted on using their right to join in electing the mayor. They obtained a confirmation of this right from Henry VII. But in larger towns things were changing. Busy men, working at bench or press or loom or forge would not come to court, even on the important day when the mayor was to be elected. The men of Chester acknowledged that they ought to come, but in 1573 no one could remember that they had ever done so. Besides, a few experienced men, ex-mayors or ex-aldermen, tended to manage affairs, and many men who attended court irregularly often found that they did not understand the business, and had little influence.

A change was necessary. Some definite body was needed to do the work for "all the burgesses." Consequently, towards the end of the fifteenth century, in many boroughs such a body * arose. Sometimes "all the burgesses" agreed that thirty to forty chosen burgesses should attend the assembly for all. Henry VII. allowed the men of York to have a "Common Council" elected by the burgesses. He sanctioned what they had done without sanction for some time. At Chester, after 1504, the citizens ought to have chosen common councilmen yearly, but as they were too lazy to choose them the mayor and councillors filled up the vacancies in their own numbers. Sometimes there was strife between the mayor and aldermen and the ordinary burgesses. At Leicester, about 1489, burgesses "of little substance or understanding" used to burst into the assembly, shouting that they ought to attend, and so broke up the meetings "by their exclamations and headiness." Henry VII. thought that

* *This body arose in different boroughs at different times,* e.g. *at York before the end of the fourteenth century.*

the mayor and aldermen governed the town better without the help of all the lesser men. In 1489 he ordered the whole community to give up their rights to elect officials and vote on proposals to forty-eight burgesses, chosen by the mayor and the twenty-four jurats or aldermen. In the same year he granted to the men of Bristol that their mayor and any two aldermen might choose forty burgesses to help them govern it. The town court in which justice was done began now to be called the mayor's court. Thus the mayor was becoming a very important personage. As for the aldermen in some boroughs, they now had the additional work of choosing common councilmen. Otherwise they did their old work, helping the mayor and keeping the King's peace in their wards. The common councilmen had usually only to give their voices in council. As yet their power was small.

Such corporations did their work vigorously, trying cases, making bye-laws, securing the rights of the town inside the borough and out. But often it was very hard to find out exactly what privileges the town possessed. For many towns were boroughs " by custom," that is to say, they had always, even in " Domesday Book," been accounted boroughs, and many of their rights were old customs, and often very obscure to sixteenth-century lawyers. In addition, each borough had old padlocked boxes full of separate charters granted by later lords and Kings from the time of William I. or Henry I. onwards, unsorted and hard to read. Consequently borough officials often were very uncertain about borough rights. During the fifteenth century Kings had sometimes granted to a borough a charter which summed up every old right, and gave a new one—the right to count the mayor and his councillors as one person in law. Such a charter was clearly convenient. Also, the counting of mayor and councillors as one person, or as the lawyers said " as a corporation," made town

law-suits easier, and the leasing and sale of town property safer. So, during the sixteenth century, many towns asked the Sovereign * for such a "charter of incorporation," and gradually, in each town, as the charter was obtained, townsmen began to call the mayor and his councillors "the corporation." Often the townsmen obtained new privileges for the town in the new charter. The most frequent one was that the mayor

FIG. 14.—The Gild Hall, Totnes, Devon, as it is to-day.

and one or two of the burgesses should be the justices of the peace for the town, so that it was not subject to the County Justices. Great was the pride with which Mr. Wyott of Barnstaple wrote in his diary on December 11, 1595—

"A new charter brought which I read in English before Mr. Mayor and most part of the Common Council. . . . 3 May, Sessions of the

* *Sometimes the King granted charters to market towns which became new boroughs. Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth granted many such charters.*

Justices of the Peace held in the Gildhall the first after the new charter, and the first ever kept in the town."

The grant of these new charters to many different boroughs had one important result. Each of the old boroughs had had its own customs, its own bye-laws, its own constitution. The new charters often sanctioned all the old arrangements ; but the Crown officials made the new charters alike in many unsettled points.* On the whole the incorporated boroughs resembled one another rather more than the unincorporated boroughs. But yet many a borough remained quite unlike any other until one great Act dealt alike with all of them in 1835.

While some towns were thriving in the most marked way, others were dwindling and diminishing in importance. As Leland rode about England between 1536 and 1540 he often noticed that the town which he had entered seemed to be "decayed," as he said. He wrote—

"The Town of Chepstow. . . . A great part of the Cumpace withyn the Walles is now converted to little Meadows and gardens . . . . There hath fallen yn ruine and sore Decay above 200 houses yn the town of Bridewater in time of remembrance."

In each case which Leland noticed there was a particular reason for the emptiness of the town. Sometimes, as at Chepstow, Leland had ridden through a "praty suburb" before he entered the old town, and people had moved into the suburb to avoid the heavy rates in the borough. Sometimes, as at Liverpool, a town had suffered severely in the fifteenth century from the quarrels of two great barons, and had not recovered. Again, some towns had not yet recovered from the losses inflicted by the Black Death

* *Such as making the mayor a Justice of the Peace, and giving the town one official called the recorder. A minor point was that the old-fashioned words "bailiff" gave way in many places to "mayor," "jurats" to "aldermen."*

in 1349. But there was one other great cause, which was felt in many places. As the country grew peaceful and trade brought more goods into each part of the land, markets held in villages increased in number and importance. More villages grew big, and began to be called by the new name of "market towns." No longer was the market of the borough the only market of the countryside.

There was a second consequence of the increasing peacefulness and safety of life in the country. It now became safe for a craftsman to live in a village,* and therefore the craftsmen began to move out. Already, in 1536, the country village of Manchester had become "the fairest, best builded, and most populous town of Lancashire."

Throughout the reign of Henry VIII. one decaying borough after another asked the King in Parliament for help. For instance, in 1529, an Act tells us how the ropemakers are leaving Bridport town, and it orders that all hemp grown within five miles of the borough shall be sold in the borough market. In 1542 another Act tells us how, in all the suburbs and villages round York, men are now making coverlets, the one special craft of York; and the Act orders that coverlets are only to be made within the city. In 1534 the citizens of Worcester and the other Worcestershire boroughs complained that weavers living in the country were ruining their trade, and an Act forbade men to make cloth in the shire; it was only to be made in the boroughs. Such complaints were specially loud in the boroughs of the clothmaking districts.† In 1563 a great Act dealt with the whole position of industries in all boroughs and the whole countryside all over England.‡ It was the Statute of Artificers. It gave boroughs and market towns advantages over villages, and it gave boroughs advantages over market

* *See Chap. VI.* † *See Map 5.*
‡ *See Chap. VI.*

towns, as centres of industry. This measure revived the vigorous life of the towns.

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Stowe, J. ..	A Survey of London ..	*Any Edition.*
Sharpe, R. R. ..	London and the Kingdom	*Sampson, Lowe & Co.*
Hindley, C. ..	A History of the Cries of London	*C. Hindley.*
Ordish, T. F. ..	Shakespeare's London ..	*J. M. Dent & Son.*
Ward and Waller	Cambridge History of Modern Literature	*Cambridge Univ. Press.*
Beaumont and Fletcher	The Knight of the Burning Pestle	*Any Edition.*
Chapman, Marston, and B. Jonson	Eastward Ho !	*Tudor Facsimile Texts.* *J. Farmer, Amersham.*
Middleton ..	The Roaring Girl ..	,,
A. S. Green ..	Town Life in the Fifteenth Century	*Macmillan & Co.*

For the history of particular towns, the "Victoria County History" (Constable), the "Historic Towns Series" (Longmans), the "Ancient Cities Series" (Methuen), or the "Story of English Towns Series" (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) may be consulted.

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CHAPTER VI

INDUSTRY

In the sixteenth century old things and new things existed side by side in the world of industry: for while the old life continued in its old ways in the boroughs, a new kind of industrial life was coming into existence in the country villages. In this chapter both kinds of craft-life are pictured, and the causes which gave birth to the newer sort are suggested.

In the narrow streets of an Elizabethan town, a man pushed his way along between "shopboards," such as are shown in the picture on p. 106. On these boards or on trestle-tables were displayed the goods made within the house. Beside the goods sat the citizen's wife, drawing custom by her pretty ways, and calling out—

"Gentlemen, what is't you lack? What is't you'll buy? See! Fine bands and ruffs, fine lawns, fine cambrics! What is't you lack, gentlemen? What is't you'll buy?" *

At another booth the apprentice was walking short turns, like a dog on a chain, or sorting his goods, or scribbling on the shop-board, standing "with a bare pate and a dropping nose under a wooden pent-house." Or perhaps, just as he was slipping away to amuse himself, out ran the master in a passion—

"Whither wilt thou now? Where's the supper? Where's the rendezvous? Thou shameless varlet thou, dost thou jest at thy lawful master contrary to thy indentures?"

---

* *Middleton, "The Roaring Girl."*

The apprentice said angrily—

"Zblood, sir, my mother is a gentlewoman and my father a Justice of the Peace, and though I am a younger son and a prentice, yet I hope

FIG. 15.—Butchers' Row, Exeter, as it was in the early part of the nineteenth century.

I am my father's son, and 'tis for your worship that I keep company among the gallants. Why—— ?"

But his master cut this short.

"Why ? Why I cannot tell—seven score pounds art thou out in the cash ! . . . look to the accounts – your father lies bond for you, seven score pounds is yet in the arrear."

A customer approached, and the other apprentice lifted

the cry, "What d'you lack, sir? What is't you'll buy, sir?" *

The master turned slowly into the house again, back to the room, half-shop, half-workroom, where his journeymen were at work, where the tapping and clinking of the goldsmith's little hammer or of the shoemakers' big one went on all day long. For still the craftsman both made and sold his goods. As a man walked from one street to another he found that he had left the goldsmiths behind, and got among the cobblers; then, in another street, he found the saddlers, and elsewhere the tanners, the hatters, grocers, weavers and the others. And among the men of each industry there were still masters, apprentices and journeymen, and the masters were still bound together in their brotherhood or craft gild. The craft gild was still the society made up of all fully-qualified master workmen in one industry. These masters usually chose two or more "wardens" or "aldermen" from themselves each year to examine all work done and to report bad work and bad workers to the mayor. The masters made rules, too, for themselves and their men; they feasted together, they went to solemn services together, and they gave alms. Such had been the work of many a gild in the fourteenth century.

Many gilds in quiet country boroughs went on in the sixteenth century with all the customs and habits of the fourteenth century. But in great gilds in large towns very important changes came about. The Gild of the Pewterers of London underwent such changes. At the opening of the

* *These street scenes caught the attention of such men as George Chapman and Thomas Green, the playwrights, just as in the fifteenth century, Lydgate had described the various London streets in the "London Lickpeny." Greene's "Tu Quoque" or the "City Gallant," Chapman's "Eastward Ho!" and Middleton's "The Roaring Girl," paint vivid pictures of the citizen in his shop and in the street, and from these plays the details above are taken.*

sixteenth century it resembled, in its broad characteristics, the gilds of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Master Pewterers chose a Master and two Wardens every year. They inspected the pewterers' work, admitted new masters and kept the common money in a common box. They gave substantial help to poor members ; one pensioner had 24*s.* a year. Often the Master and Wardens used the common fund to buy Cornish tin, which they resold cheaply to the members. But even in the fifteenth century changes had crept in. Already before 1456 some masters were so much better off than others that they took special rank. In 1456 the men of the craft were called either " brethren " or just plain " masters " ; they were the employers, and their men were called " covenant men " and apprentices. There were 41 brethren and 15 ordinary masters, and they employed 141 covenant men and boys. Thomas Dormton, one of the brethren, had 7 " covenant men " (that is, journeymen) and 11 apprentices. His shop and his household must have been very different from the little place where Thomas Launtot, an ordinary master, worked with only one apprentice to help him. Twenty years later, when a voluntary levy was made, many masters gave nothing, some gave 1*d.*, and others sums up to 12*s.* 4*d.* There must have been a great difference between the richest and poorest of the masters. It was to please the richer ones that various additions were made to the expenses attached to membership of the gild. First the " brethren " made a custom of wearing the gild " livery," or uniform consisting of gown and hood, made one year of deep violet cloth, and changed perhaps in the next year. Such a gown cost perhaps 13*s.* 4*d.*, or £10—£12 of our money. Men like Thomas Launtot could not afford this. Men who could afford it went up and sat on the dais, or near it, at gild meetings ; the other masters stayed talking and drinking,

in their ordinary clothes, at the lower or side tables. In 1564 there were 30 of the richer masters "in the Clothing," as the Pewterers said, and 32 of the poorer ones "out of the Clothing." In 1588 there were 40 in the Clothing, and 3 at least out of it, and they did not attend a state dinner given by the gild. In the sixteenth century it was only these masters "in the Clothing," or "of the Livery," whom the Masters and Wardens called to advise them in the craft government. It was from them that the Master and the Wardens were chosen annually. It was the Liverymen who began to decide which masters might become one of their own number, and buy a gown, and give the gild a silver spoon of an ounce weight, as as entrance present. This last privilege had become a custom among the Pewterers even before 1500.

FIG. 16.—Liverymen at the Coronation Procession of Edward VI. (From a drawing made soon after.) The Liverymen of a Gild or Company are standing in front, the ordinary citizens behind. The Liverymen are all dressed alike in dark gowns, with hats or hoods hanging over their shoulders. It was these gowns and hoods which were made of such rich stuffs that they became very expensive.

The Liverymen probably found that the sittings at which they helped the Master were long and tiresome, even when the Wardens took 4*d.* from the common box and sent out for beer. Soon a more convenient practice arose. A certain number of the Livery were chosen to help the Master and Wardens; among the Pewterers the number was eight. They were usually old, experienced men, often important pewterers, who had themselves been Master or Warden. The craftsmen called these select Liverymen the "Assistance," and treated them

with great deference in the common hall, and in church, and in their shops. The Pewterers' records first speak of the Assistance in 1522. Probably then the plan was still new. In 1560 the Craft decided that the Master and Wardens were to do nothing without the " Assistants " ; evidently year by year these latter had shown themselves to be wise and discreet pewterers and citizens.

But in spite of these differences, which altered the social life at gild feasts so much, all pewterers, masters and men too, went together to the great religious service on the Day of the Assumption of the Virgin (August 24), held in the Church of All Hallows, Lombard Street. Until 1558 the Pewterers called this service " the Master's Mass." But after 1558 the celebration was changed. For hitherto the Pewterers had paid several priests and some singing men to chant Mass, to which the craftsmen had gone with great candles and offerings of money. Now they paid " the Curate for his pains at the Communion, and a preacher for his pains at the Sermon." Besides, the Pewterers had always had memorial services sung for dead members ; they held lands which had been left as endowments for the purpose. In 1549 Parliament gave all such lands to the King. However, the craftsmen paid certain sums to the Crown * in return for which they kept all the lands left to them, and used them henceforward to provide a fund for sick and poor old Pewterers.

The sixteenth-century journeyman lived in his master's house. From March to September work began at 5 a.m. and went on until 7 p.m., with an interval for breakfast, dinner and " drinking "—the beer and bread which took the place of tea.

* *In* 1550, *the Pewterers and ten other city companies bought all these lands back from the Crown. They used the income from them for their charities.*

In winter, work hours were "from the spring of the day until nightfall." The journeyman's Sundays and free times were partly under the control of the master, who was supposed to act as a severe parent. The Pewterers ordained in 1561 that the journeyman must even go to his master's church with his family :

"no journeyman go to any offering (service), but duly wait upon their masters on Sundays and Holydays until evensong, and then, with leave, go where honesty shall require, as to shooting and suchlike."

Half a year's notice of leaving was required. But changes of service were thought bad and discreditable to master and man. A month's job, or a week's job, was looked at askance. Usually the engagement was from Michaelmas to Michaelmas, for a wage reckoned by the day and paid by the month.

Usually, by the sixteenth century, the journeyman was one who had been an apprentice, for the system of apprenticeship worked well and was growing more and more common. Even poor boys were apprenticed. But often when their years were up they could not afford to be admitted as masters. Among the pewterers such youths worked for some years as journeymen, engaged with a master for a year at a time.

In the sixteenth century many men expected to work like this all their lives. But in one way the journeyman's time was pleasanter than that of his predecessor in the fourteenth century had been. The Pewterers had been obliged to allow the journeymen to make a society of their own.* Since the last quarter of the fifteenth century, at least,† it had been recognised as lawful. It was, however, a society, ruled not by the journeymen but by wardens appointed by the Livery. The Liverymen appointed three of themselves to act as Master and Wardens of the Society of Yeomanry. It had only a

* *This change happened in many other crafts, not only in London, but in crafts in the larger boroughs such as Bristol, Coventry, and Oxford.*

† *The earliest record is of* 1495, *and it refers to previous years' work.*

limited power of making its own rules. As of old, the masters still governed the men. The society was not in the least like a Trades Union, which is an association of workers to govern themselves and to bargain collectively with the employer.

The Society of Journeymen Pewterers was called the "Yeomanry" or "Yemandry." When the Masters and Wardens of the whole craft were chosen once a year, the Yeomanry came into the Common Hall and voted with the Liverymen and the other masters at the election. The Yeomanry also paid fines and contributions into a common box for common purposes of the whole craft.

But the Yeomanry had some business and some celebrations and certain officers all of their own. At certain times of the year these officers took possession of the Common Hall and prepared it for a banquet. Then the Wardens and Master of the Yeomen, in their gowns, took their places at the high table; below sat the journeymen and their wives; each couple paid 16*d.*, and each "lone journeyman" paid 8*d.* We know also that, beside journeymen, some of the poorer masters and their wives came to this feast. They paid 16*d.*, just like the journeymen couples. This fact is very interesting, because it shows us that the poorer masters, employers though they were, had no objection to dining with the Yeomanry, and not with the Liverymen. In manners and looks and habits they and their wives were just like their employés. Socially, a difference existed between the rich masters and all the rest, but not between the ordinary master and his man; in trade rank, however, the difference was one between master and man.

The Yeomanry of the Pewterers went to the Master's Mass, and they also had religious observances of their own. They kept candles lit before the altar in the church of the Austin Friars. They all attended Mass together on the Sunday next after Michaelmas Day. They called themselves the Fraternity

of St. Michael. They attended each other's funerals, bearing torches and tapers, and made offerings. One year's accounts show that at the beginning of the year they had 6*s*. 3*d*. in their common box, then they got in members' subscriptions, which made the total amount £3 17*s*. 6*d*. They spent 34*s*. at the wax-chandler's for torches and tapers for funerals and for the candles at St. Austin's ; and 10*d*. on paper, ink, a coffer and tablecloths for the hall. After making offerings and other expenses at funerals they had 26*s*. 9*d*. left in the common box. Often pewterers left bequests to the "Yemandry," and these were duly entered in the accounts thus: "Of the bequest of William Bacheler, 2 silver spoons, on whose soul God have mercy." Clearly these spoons were intended for use at the Yeoman's feast.

Thus the young journeyman saved first until he had enough to pay the annual subscription to the Yemandry. As soon as he had begun to pay this regularly he began to save so that he could be admitted formally into the craft as a master. This ought to have been quite easy since the medieval fee had always been well within reach of a careful man. Parliament, too, had tried to secure this. In 1531 an Act ordered that the fee for admittance into any craft should never be more than 3*s*. 4*d*. But times were changing. The Pewterers kept this rule, but many crafts broke it and raised the fee higher and higher. Even when he was admitted and "free of his craft," the sixteenth-century journeyman no longer called himself a master, or set up his shop. He merely called himself a journeyman or freeman of his craft.

In the position of the apprentice one change was very marked. In the fourteenth century boys were apprenticed only if they could easily afford it. By degrees, however, fathers became more and more anxious to apprentice their children, as apprenticeship gave them a good standing in the

gild later on. In the sixteenth century apprenticeship was the common course. Little boys must have talked then about "When I am an apprentice." When a boy was about twelve his father went to arrange with the master craftsman about the indentures, that is, the written agreement between the father and the master. Then the father and the master put their seals at the foot of the document, pressing them down on the hot red wax. They had to go into the assembly of the craft, and the master took the little boy and "presented" him to the Wardens, and paid them a fee for accepting him. The father, too, put down a fee, usually about 2*s.* 6*d.* Then the father went away, leaving the boy to live in the master's family, and unless the master gave a day's holiday now and then the boy did not see his parents again for seven years. For these seven years the master's house was his home, year in, year out. When the seven years were up the fourteenth-century apprentice had usually become a freeman and master. But the sixteenth-century apprentice had very often to consider whether he need not work first as a journeyman. Only if he had some money of his own could he afford to open his own shop at once. In the latter case he "became free" at once. A pewterer's apprentice came before the Master and Wardens with his master and the master spoke of his character, of his means, and of his skill; then the apprentice brought and uncovered a pewter piece which he had made. The skilful Wardens looked at it and decided whether the workmanship was satisfactory. If it was he paid his 3*s.* 4*d.* and took the solemn oath of the freemen. Then very often the new-made freeman and his former master, and their friends among the Wardens, and others, went to the alehouse and spent some pence on cakes and ale.

The chief developments among the London pewterers

were the increasing division between richer and poorer masters, the foundation of the Yeomanry, and the insistence on apprenticeship. Among other crafts, tailors and smiths, and saddlers and cutlers and others, just the same things were going on. Thus the old gild was growing and changing.

Another change was taking place in industry. In old days all craftsmen, beyond the humblest village smiths and carpenters, had lived in the boroughs. There only they were safe; but now it was different. After Henry VII. had established order, life was more secure than it had been. There were positive advantages in living in the country. When taxes were raised country people paid one-thirteenth of the value of their goods, townsmen one-tenth. Burgesses paid town levies as well; and, if they were craftsmen, they paid craft gild dues. Besides, the gildsman was ruled and inspected by his wardens.

Therefore in the sixteenth century craftsmen began to move out of the boroughs into market towns. Manchester was growing from a little village into a large market town. About 1540 Leland visited Birmingham or Bremischam as he called it. He wrote—

"The beauty of Bremischam a good market town . . . is in one strete goynge up along almote from the lefte rive [bank] of the bróke up a mene hill by the lengthe of a quarter of a mile. I saw but one paroche Churche in the towne. There be many smiths in the town that use to make knives and all maner of cuttynge tools, and many lorimers that make byts and a great many naylors. . . . I came thro' a praty strete or even I entered into Bremischam toune. This strate as I remember is caullyd Dyrtey; in it dwelle smithes and cuttelers, and there is a brooke that devydithe this strete from Bremischam."

All these men had gone to live outside any borough. Many craftsmen actually began to work in small villages. For example, weavers began to set up looms in country cottages outside Guildford, in Surrey. Cloth had been made in the borough

of Guildford since the thirteenth century. In that century the weavers sat working in house after house in the town. The grumbling sound of the loom-pedals creaking could be heard at many a door. But in the sixteenth century these old houses were losing their weavers. Out at Godalming, at Thursley, Pitford, Frensham, even in Aldershot, Headley

Fig. 17.—A shop at Lingfield, Surrey, as it is at present. This house was built probably in the latter part of the fifteenth century. It shows the wooden framework, as made in the woody districts of Surrey.

and Bramshott, weavers who had learned their work in town were hiring cottages and putting up their looms in the end of the living-room. So it was in many other villages in other clothmaking shires.* Meantime in Guildford was appearing a new figure, the clothier. This man had usually been bred to the craft of fulling or finishing cloth. Sometimes he had been bred a weaver or a dyer of cloth. He had a shop

* *See Map* 5.

in Guildford, facing the street, part of a handsome house. In the shop stood great presses full of cloth; there were rolls of cloth and bales of it, ready packed for transport. There was rough homespun, and also cloth that was dyed and finished. Some clothiers had their own dye-houses.

The clothier probably spent less than half his time in his shop. Once a week at least he rode out to his employés. He went well-mounted, often with plump money bags, and a couple of sturdy servants with parcels of raw wool trussed up behind them. His ride was not always without danger. A London citizen noted in his diary in 1555 how some clothiers had been attacked by highway robbers and had fought them for a long time; yet they took all their goods, and did them much harm.

When the clothier drew rein at the village inn his work began. He had to go round from one cottage to another and from one farm to another. Going to a cottage he called for the good wife and her daughters, who were spinning his wool into yarn. He paid for the work done and gave out some more wool to be spun. Sometimes he gave a weight of wool above a pound, and called it a pound, thus cheating the work-people. The goodman was perhaps a weaver; the clothier stepped in to look at the cloth on the loom, to pay for what was ready and to commission the next week's work. The wife and daughters sorted the raw wool into lengths and combed, or "carded" it. Next the clothier went to a better house, where the dyer had his dye-house. If it was near shearing-time the clothier visited the manor-house and the larger farm-houses, to see what bargains he could make for wool. Meantime, in the village, his servants packed the week's output of finished cloth on their horses, to be transferred to the presses in the shop when they reached home. Clothiers sometimes tried to pay their workers, not

with good silver pennies and shillings, but with pins, girdles and such unprofitable ware. The poor folk had no chance of selling such things and they did not want them for their own use. The clothiers had been forbidden to use this trick by an Act of Parliament as early as 1465. Sometimes, too, the clothiers allowed their debts to the workers to mount up before paying them. In 1577 a clothier of Sarum owed the poor weavers of Sarum a great debt of £40. This organisation of industry, whereby clothiers employed workpeople in their own homes, has been given the name of the "Semi-Domestic" system, in contrast with the old "Domestic" system where each man worked for himself at home.

Sometimes the clothiers were more successful than honest, as their customers found. Many of them kept "racks," for stretching the cloth when it came home fresh and soft. These racks were kept somewhere behind the shop on open grounds. By skilfulness they stretched the cloth sometimes from a length of 18 yards to one of 22 yards, making it proportionately weak. Sometimes they sold cloth which had faults as good material. In the language of the trade it was "cockly," "raw," "flocky," or "chawkey." Both the Government and honest clothiers did all they could to prevent this, as it gave the cloth a bad name.*

Not only in the cloth industry was this change going on; other craftsmen, too, were moving into the country. For

* *The demand for English cloth came largely from foreign countries. Much of the cloth in the Guildford shop had to go to France, or Italy, or even Pomerania and Prussia and the Baltic coasts. Some of it might patch a Russian coat before it perished. From Guildford therefore it must be got to London and there be shipped. Now the work of bringing it to London was often done by the clothier himself (see Chap. VII.). If not by him, it was done by a country draper who bought it in Guildford. In either case it was taken to Blackwell Hall, and sold there to the great London exporters (see Chap. VIII.) or to the Londoners who supplied English merchants from distant ports with Guildford cloth. For each cloth-weaving district produced its own variety of material. These districts are marked on map* 5, *and the kind of cloth produced is noted there.*

instance, in some villages in Buckinghamshire the women made lace. Northwards at the village of Long Crendon, craftsmen made needles—in fact, Long Crendon was one of the main sources of supply of needles in England. By 1580 glass houses were established at Alfold, Ewhurst, and Chiddingfold in Surrey, and in a village in the Sussex Weald. Both in Kent and Sussex, in the villages of the Weald, the iron foundries were at work which produced the cast iron fire-backs and fire-dogs which are sometimes to be seen in old furniture shops and in museums.

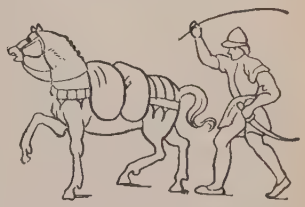
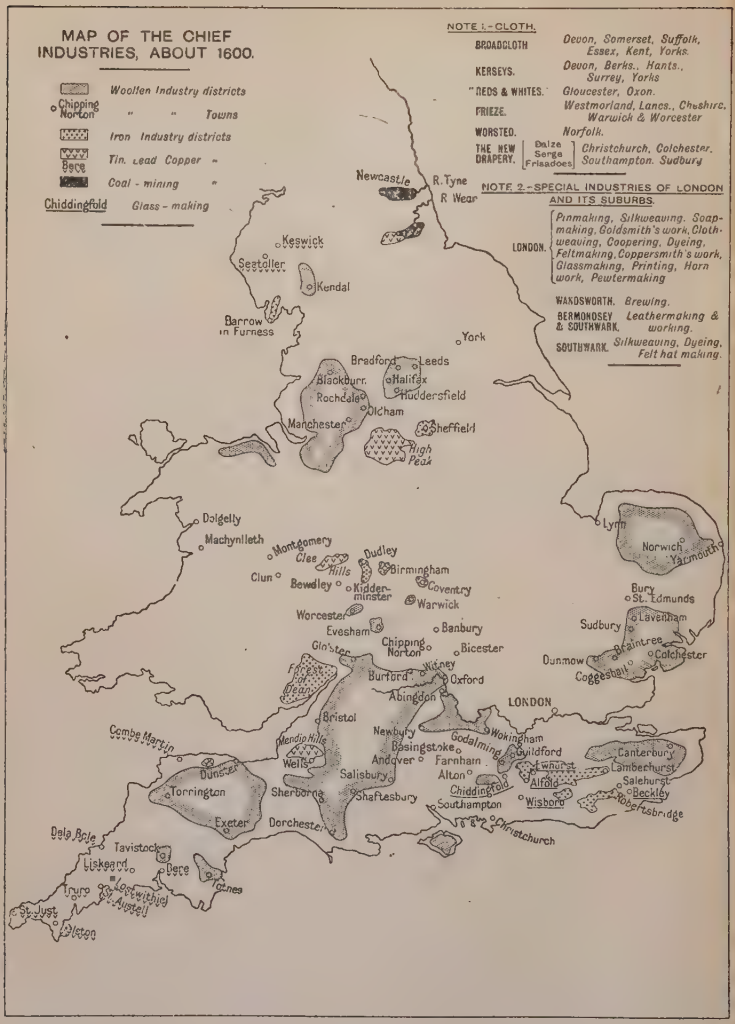


Fig. 18.—A packhorse and driver. (From a drawing made soon after 1544.) The packhorse is carrying two sacks. Often the leading horse of the string bore a bell attached to the band round its breast.

As soon as the removal of craftsmen into the country had taken place on a large scale, people began to complain of bad work. In the villages no one inspected the work, and no one guaranteed its quality; no one forced the workmen to be trained. Every one thought that this bad state of affairs could be improved if all workers were compelled to be apprenticed. In craft after craft therefore, Parliament ordered that apprenticeship should be compulsory. In 1537 an Act laid down the rule that cloth should not be made by men who had not been apprenticed for seven years, except in an Artificer's borough. In 1563 Parliament swept away all old rules and made the Statute of Artificers.

In making this Act burgesses and knights of the shire wanted to enforce apprenticeship upon all, and to do more besides. They thought that the work of certain crafts needed too much money to justify poor lads in entering them. Doubtless some burgesses wanted to keep their own craft closed to the



MAP 5.—Map of Industries about 1600.

children of others, so as to make life easier for their own children. Some, too, wanted to give boroughs some help, for some had seen their own borough getting empty as craftsmen removed to country village and market town.* And the knights wanted their tenants' sons to be well trained in husbandry; they wanted to see plenty of jolly young labourers on the land, where they were needed. All these ideas helped to shape the Act of 1563.

First, the Act divided crafts into the simplest, the less simple, and the most exacting. As to the simplest—

"it shall be lawful for any person exercising the art of a smith, wheelwright, ploughman, millwright, carpenter, rough mason, plaisterer, sawyer, lime burner, brickmaker, bricklayer, tiler, slater, healyer,† tilemaker, linerweaver, turner, cooper, miller, earthen potter, woollen weaver, weaving housewives' cloth and none other, clothpuller . . . burner of ore . . . thatcher or shingler,‡ wheresoever he shall dwell, to have the son of any person as apprentice, . . . albeit the father or mother . . . have not any lands. . . ."

Thus in any place, town, or country, any child, even the child of the poorest day labourer, might be taught one of these simple, necessary crafts. But it was not to be so with the others. There were many less simple trades to be found in every large village or market town, as well as in all boroughs. Such were the crafts of the capper, saddler, glover, vintner, fishmonger, and weaver. The Act permitted craftsmen of this sort, living in market towns, to train apprentices. But they might only take craftsmen's children, and these children must come either from the same town, or from other market towns in the shire. So no village child might enter these crafts in a market town, but only if he or she was sent away to a borough.

* *See Chap. V.*

† *Slater or tiler.*

‡ *A man who covers rooves with "shingles," wooden pieces of oblong shape, thicker at one end than at the other.*

Lastly, the Act picked out the most exacting crafts, which are named in it as follows—

"It shall not be lawful for any person dwelling in any city or town corporate* exercising . . . the craft of a merchant trafficking . . . beyond the sea, mercer, draper, goldsmith, ironmonger, embroiderer, or clothier . . . to take any apprentice . . . except . . . his son, or else that the father or mother . . . shall have lands . . . of the clear yearly value of 40*s.* of inheritance or freehold. . . ."

In market towns the father and mother of the apprentice must have even more, viz. such land to the value of £3 a year. Boroughs and market towns were to be the schools for apprentices in these important businesses; and often too, the boroughs might accept the children of poorer people. This fact gave the boroughs an advantage. Thus young men and women had now to be trained, and trained mostly in towns, though they could work afterwards in the country if they liked.

Next the members of Parliament in passing the Act turned to the question of wages. There were old arrangements in existence dating back to the times of Edward III. and Richard II.† Since 1389 the Justices of the Peace, in their own districts, had fixed wages for the chief kinds of work. The Act of 1563 revised the old plan, and it tells us very clearly what was to be done.

"The justices of the peace . . . and the sheriff . . . and the Mayor . . . within any city . . . shall . . . yearly at every general sessions first to be holden after Easter . . . or within 6 weeks next following Easter, calling unto them such grave and discreet persons . . . as they shall think meet, and conferring together as to the scarcity or plenty of the times, and other circumstances, . . . [shall] have authority to rate and appoint the wages . . . of . . . artificers . . . or any other laborer . . . and shall yearly before the 12th day of July . . . certify the same into the Court of Chancery, whereupon it shall be lawful to the Lord Chancellor . . . upon declaration thereof

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* *See Chap. V.*

† *In* 1351 *the Statute of Labourers had instituted a regular tariff of wages for the whole country. In* 1389, *under a new Act, men in each district had been ordered to fix wages for that district periodically. This usage had gone on ever since.*

to the Queen's Majesty . . . or to the Lords and others of the Privy Council to cause to be printed and sent down before the 1st day of September next . . . proclamations containing the several rates appointed . . . upon receipt whereof the said Sheriffs Justices [etc.] . . . shall forthwith in open markets upon the market days before Michaelmas . . . cause the same proclamation to be proclaimed . . . and to be fixed in some convenient place."

These orders were carried out, in some counties at any rate, for about one hundred and fifty years. Lists of wages have been preserved, some dated in the early part of the eighteenth century. They go into the utmost detail. On the whole, the justices' scales seem to have been satisfactory to workers and masters alike.

Thus the great changes of the Tudor period were first the development of class distinctions within the gilds, and second the growth of crafts in country places. These changes produced an industrial life a little different from that of the Middle Ages. It was the life which lasted, with all its simplicity and comfort, until the older England was shattered by the Industrial Revolution.*

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Bland, A. E., and Tawney, R.	Select Documents Illustrating English Industrial History	*G. Bell & Sons.*
Unwin, G. ..	The Gilds and Companies of London	*Methuen & Co.*
„ „ ..	Industrial Organisation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries	*Clarendon Press.*

* *See Book VI.*

CHAPTER VII

INTERNAL TRADE

In the reigns of the Tudor sovereigns, the roads were very little better kept than they had been under Henry V. or Edward III. It is difficult to picture them. As late as 1598, on the great North Road, just opposite the important town of Ware, it was said "the Highway is very ruinous, and washed away by the inflood of water thereupon, so that for a long time it hath been impassable for men as well as for horses." At Bishop's Stortford on the highroad to Cambridge, a well-to-do yeoman, Thomas Matthew, owned the fields lying along the highway. All along his land, the ditch was choked with rotting leaves and branches and mud and overgrowth. In rainy weather great pools of water formed right across the road, which in winter was so flooded with water or ice that neither man nor horse could pass. Even in better weather it was hard to force a way along the crumbling roadside, past the branches which had not been cut back. Bridges were unsafe, and often a winter's flood broke down the waterworn piers of the arches, and swept the whole bridge away.

One reason for the bad state of the roads was clear. From time immemorial the repair of the road had been the duty of the tenant whose land adjoined it. He had to have his ditches cleaned out, so as to keep the road dry, and was obliged also to fill up any big holes in the way. He did this by tilting in soil of any kind, or any rubbish that was handy. But the difficulty was to make Thomas Matthew and his like do this duty. If a man did not do it, he was merely reported

at the Manor Court, and fined, often only 2*d.* or 3*d.* Many a man went on for several years with the same ditch uncleaned. In the first half of the sixteenth century there was increasing traffic in food goods upon all the roads leading to London. Meantime, increased trade in cloth caused a greater stir of traffic in the cloth-making shires. Thus, by the middle of the sixteenth century, in many places men were crying out upon the roads.

Every one could see that some fresh arrangement was needed and they all realised that there must be some responsible official in each parish to see that the work was done, and to report offenders, not to the sleepy Manor Court, but to the vigorous Justices of the Peace. In 1556 an Act was passed which enacted that—

"The Constables and Churchwardens of every Parish . . . shall yearly upon the Tuesday or Wednesday in Easter week call together a number of the Parishioners and shall there choose . . . 2 honest persons . . . to be Surveyors . . . for one year . . . for the works of amendment of the highways in their parish leading to any market town. And the said Constables and Churchwardens shall then also name 4 days * for the amending of the said ways before the Feast of the Birth of St. John Baptist next [June 24] . . . and shall openly in the Church the next Sunday after Easter give knowledge of the same."

Every one who had 120 acres of ploughland was to send a cart, two men, and the necessary tools; every one who held less was to answer for one labourer and his shovel and pick. Men who did not send their due or who did not come for all the "Statute days" were to be fined by the Justices.

Thus the work upon the roads was quite altered in character. Instead of one man tinkering at his own piece of ditch, chilly and lonely, there were the carts and men of the whole parish working in the long May or June days, at the whole length of the highway. But still it was not easy to get the people to

* *In* 1562 *the number of days was altered to six.*

leave their own work for the "Statute days." At Bishop's Stortford, in 1598, eight men were "behind with their carts" (*i.e.* had not sent them), some four days, some three, some two; and thirty-five men had never sent any labourer at all. The Surveyors sent in their names to the Justices at Quarter Sessions, so that they should be fined. There were constant difficulties not only in Hertfordshire, but in Middlesex, Yorkshire, everywhere. Far into the eighteenth century the roads remained difficult and dangerous.

Upon such highways by far the greater bulk of goods travelled upon packhorses, padding along on the turf, or upon a causeway of rough stones, with the leader's bell ringing clear, and the crack of the whip. Travellers pushed along as they had done always. Some were on foot—

> "Jog on, jog on, the footpath way
> And merrily hent the stile-a:
> A merry heart goes all the day,
> Your sad tires in a mile-a."

Others splashed through the pools on horseback. In each little place there were men who hired out horses. These men were called "hackneymen" in the sixteenth century. Sometimes the traveller got a bad horse; sometimes the hackneyman got a bad rider who over-rode the horse. Besides, hired horses had to be sent back, and a guide onwards arranged for at each place—all so many difficulties to be got over.

Even the sending of a letter was difficult. Very rarely does it happen that we want to send a letter to a place to which there is no regular way of dispatch ready for any one to use. Most European countries belong to the great Postal Union under which the posts of different nations work together. But in the sixteenth century no such safe public means of sending letters existed even within England. People still did as they always had done. Great men sent special servants with their own letters. Lesser men managed to find some one

who happened to be going in the right direction. In 1536 a monk of the great Abbey of Whalley in Lancashire, was studying at Oxford. It so happened that a foot traveller named William Rede came to Whalley Abbey and asked hospitality one night. He proved to be journeying to his home in Oxford—

"William Rede, of Oxford, Baker, being at Whalley asked the Abbot if he would have anything conveyed to his Scholar at Oxford. He said yes, and begged him to wait for a letter. . . . After dinner he delivered him a letter to be conveyed to his Scholar, . . . and (Rede) departed towards Oxford, having but 5d. of the said Abbot for the carriage of the said letters. By the way he turned into the Schoolmaster of Nuttesforth's [Knutsford's] house, where he was wont to have refreshing when he travelled between Oxford and Lancashire. Next morning the Schoolmaster gave him a packet of letters closed within one paper, and prayed him to deliver it to his son Philip at Oriel College to his own hands. . . . Next morning (Rede) came to Wotton, where he turned into the Constable's house and warmed him."

There the foolish traveller talked and said he had letters. Unluckily the constable insisted upon reading the letters, and then, as he thought they were treasonable, he insisted on taking them to a Justice of the Peace, for him to read, so those particular letters were never delivered at all. But other people were more fortunate, even though the finding out of the necessary traveller often took time and inquiry. When he was found, he sometimes proved inquisitive and fussy ; or else he needed much persuasion before he would take the letter at all. A London gentleman, Mr. John Chamberlain, wrote to Mr. Carleton at Ostend in May, 1598.

"This letter I send by Mr. Clark. I caused my man to find him out in Little Wood Street, but by his saying [*i.e.* by what my man tells me] he made great questions and examinations more than the conveying of a letter comes to, so that if you have any better means let me know of it."

Nevertheless on May 13, Chamberlain received a letter from Carleton dated May 10. Such quickness was a matter of luck and could not be depended upon. Thus struggling

under the old difficulties, internal trade under the Tudors continued in the old ways of the fourteenth century.

The old fairs were still held. Many new fairs, too, had come into existence, for since the fourteenth century Kings had granted the right to hold a fair to many lords of villages and to many boroughs. In 1586 William Harrison, an Essex clergyman, wrote—

"There is almost no town in England but hath one or more such marts [*i.e.* fairs] holden yeerlie in the same; although some of them be scarce comparable to Louse fair * and little else bought or sold in them more than good drink, pies, and some pedlery trash . . . yet there are divers not inferior to the greatest marts in Europe; as Sturbridgefaire near Cambridge, Bristol Fair, Bartholomew Fair at London,† Lynn Mart, Coldfair at Newport pond for cattle, and at divers others."

Moreover country people still went to the market town once a week to buy and sell. But since the fourteenth century trade had greatly increased in volume. For instance the trade in cloth had increased. The "drapers" or dealers in cloth had become steadily richer and more numerous during the fifteenth century. The drapers went about more busily than ever, buying cloth sometimes directly from the weavers, sometimes from the clothiers. Some clothiers, too, came to London to sell their cloth direct to the great export merchants. In one play, *The London Prodigal* (1605), a Devonshire clothier, Master Oliver, comes to London to sell cloth and to court a London lady. In his broad accent he says to his father, "You know me well. *Cha* [I] have three score pack of Karsey [*i.e.* Kersey, a coarse narrow cloth, usually ribbed] at Blackwell Hall, and credit besides." Blackwell Hall

* *Louse Fair was the old clothes market in London. Strictly speaking, one could not call it a fair, but a market. Harrison names it here because of the poor goods sold in it.*

† *The only big fair held in or near London. It was held on 23, 24, 25 August, in the space outside the Monastery of St. Bartholomew, Smithfield. The old houses there were called "cloth fair" within living memory. It survived as a great pleasure fair to the early years of the nineteenth century.*

stood in Basinghall Street. It was the sale-room to which all country clothiers and drapers had to bring their cloth.* It was open daily and was full of country dealers, London merchants, foreign merchants buying wholesale,† citizens and their wives buying by retail. It was a great market. Country dealers went home with pockets full of money, and they and their men had more to spend in country markets than their grandfathers had had. At markets and on fair-grounds, men were carrying on their affairs in the old ways.

Yet change was coming. It came, for instance, in regard to the conveyance of letters. The old haphazard ways of sending letters did not do for important affairs, and least of all for those of the Sovereign. The King had always had as part of his household his own special messengers working under the control of his household officers. These messengers rode in royal livery on the King's horses, but if need were they could call on the mayor of a town or the constable in a village for horses for the King's service. Yet time was often wasted while the messenger waited for the King's lieges to bring him a fresh horse, and each man tried to keep his own horse back. The messenger went wherever the King directed. If the King were specially engaged in correspondence with Scotland, for several months the man rode up and down the Great North Road, perhaps during the whole summer. If the King was busy with Wales the messenger rode through St. Albans and Coventry to Chester, perhaps once a week for seven or eight weeks. On the route between Dover and London royal messengers were always lumbering along.

Royal letters increased in number as the Tudor Kings made their power felt in every part of England; and it is to

* *See Chap. VI.* † *See Chap. VIII.*

their insistence on real efficiency that we owe our first posts. King Henry VIII. appointed a special "Master of the Posts." Before Queen Mary came to the throne, the Master had begun to arrange with certain men at certain places to keep horses on purpose for the messengers. These keepers of horses were themselves called the "ordinary posts." * Apparently they were established first along the Dover Road, where we get a clear picture of them in the reign of Queen Mary in a paper drawn up in the Privy Council.

"There shall be ordinary posts laid at Dover, Canterbury, Sittingbourne, Rochester, Dartford, and London. And as many ships come up to Gravesend, for saving of the tide there shall be a post appointed there to serve from thence to Rochester, and to Dartford. Every of the posts shall be bound to have always the number of 6 horses at the least, 2 for the Pacquet [letters] and 4 for goers and comers by post. The ordinary post shall always have a horn hanging at the door, or some other sign declaring that it be the post-house."

The horn still hung at post-house doors in Queen Elizabeth's reign. About 1579 the Queen ordered—

"Every post shall have 2 letter bags, lined with good baize. Every post shall keep 3 horses at the least stabled so near the house that they may be ready to depart within a quarter of an hour at the least after he heareth the boy or man blow his horn that bringeth it. The ordinary post must dwell at the post room. The Master of the posts shall place his posts in such places in each town as he that rideth in post may have commodity both of lodging and meat and drink if he list to tarry."

The ordinary post employed a man or a boy to ride with the letter bag to the next post.

"No post boy shall be without his horn, and blow it at least 4 times in every mile. No postman or boy carrying the Pacquet may suffer any man to look into the bag."

The post boys were expected to ride seven miles an hour in

* "*Post*" *comes from Latin* "*positus*"—*a man placed at a given point. Hence it means the man who supplied the horses at a certain place.*

summer, and five in winter, so that the journey to Berwick in winter was counted to take sixty hours.

It was the Master of the Posts who found men to undertake the work of ordinary post. The following is an agreement made in 1579 between the Master and a post :—

"William Mee, the post at Chester,* humbly declareth that he will keep post horses and be ready at all times to ride with letters delivered him by the Mayor of Chester to be conveyed to Court. And he will attend [*i.e.* wait] at the Court, if he be commanded some 6 or 8 days to return to Chester with letters; and after he has presented them to the Mayor of Chester, he will . . . by the Mayor's direction see them conveyed to the first ship . . . ready to depart for Dublin at or between the havens at Beaumaris and Lierpoole" [*i.e.* Liverpool].

Mee's wages were two shillings a day for his horses, and a sum for his own keep. The Master of the Posts saw that the messenger employed actually came to Court, and was sent to the Queen's Secretaries.

Gradually, although special riders still went wherever the Queen required, certain important highways became regular post-routes, and there were post-houses in certain towns along each of these roads. About 1580 the regular routes were (1) London to Dover, (2) London to Berwick,† (3) London to Holyhead,‡ (4) London to Paris, through Rouen, (5) to Bruges through Antwerp. Along all these the post went once a week; and other routes, like that from London to Rye, were made soon after.

No sooner was this good order established than unauthorised people tried to get the benefit of it, both for

* *In* 1578 *Irish affairs were in a very serious state. Elizabeth's officials there were living in the midst of civil war, and anticipating an invasion in the Papal interest. Consequently there were many royal letters to be sent to Ireland.*

† *Through Ware, Huntingdon, Stamford, Grantham, Newark, Northallerton, Durham, Newcastle. There were post-houses in all these towns and in others between them. "Post house wynd" still exists in Darlington. (Cf. map of the seventeenth-century roads at the end of Bk. V.)*

‡ *Through St. Albans, Dunstable, Stony Stratford, Coventry, Litchfield, Chester, Beaumaris, Holyhead.*

travelling and for sending letters, and very soon the Crown permitted them to do so. Even under Queen Mary it was recognised that people might travel in company with the official rider. For her rules say that the post must

FIG. 19.—The White Hart Inn, Southwark, as it was in 1881. The picture shows the first yard of the inn, looking out into Borough High Street. That street, leading to London Bridge was lined with inns. The White Hart was one of the largest. It had a second long yard behind the first. Jack Cade made it his head-quarters when he advanced on London in 1450. It was known to Shakespeare. The original building was probably partly destroyed in the great Southwark fire of 1676. But it was probably not very unlike this, with the yard lined with stables, and galleries above. People looked down "from the gallery" on play actors performing in the yard.

"keep two horses for pacquets (*i.e.*, for the man actually carrying the letter bag), and four for goers and comers in post." The Crown gained because the post made money by travellers, and so was content with less wage.

The rules continued—

"No man shall ride post without a guide which guide shall have his horn which he shall blow at the town's end where the post is laid; and he shall be bound to carry the Currer's [Traveller's] male [bag] being of a reasonable weight. The guide shall bring the Currer to the door of the Ordinary Post where they shall both alight from their horses, and take them in the same place and not elsewhere."

Indeed, no ordinary hackneyman was allowed to hire out a horse to a man who was going to ride "in post," that is, in company with the letter carrier. This was most strictly forbidden. The post was to have the monopoly of such travellers' custom. The travellers' trick of hiring horses from a hackneyman, and then joining the post boy on the road, was also forbidden. If one hired cheap hackneyman's horses at one penny a mile, one was not to have the same privileges as posters at twopence a mile. Only if—

"Currers [*i.e.* travellers] come so thick or in such numbers as the post's furniture [*i.e.* horses and harness] will not serve, then the hackneyman shall supply the lack, at the appointment of the Ordinary Post."

Posting cost more than ordinary riding, but it was worth the money. Paul Hentzner, a German traveller, landed at Rye in 1598, and took post horses for London. "It is surprising," he says, "how swiftly they run!" On his return to the Continent, he found the special advantage of having a guide. At Canterbury he says—

"We mounted post horses and arrived about 2 or 3 in the morning at Dover. On the way . . . our guide, a youth, was before us with 2 of our Company. . . . We had lost sight of our friends; we came afterwards to where the road divided; on the right it was downhill and marshy, on the left was a small hill. . . . While we stopped here in doubt, we saw . . . some horsemen . . . exactly resembling our friends. . . . We determined to set on after them, but it happened through God's mercy that . . . they did not answer us, but kept on down the marshy road at such a rate that their horses' feet struck fire at every stretch which made us begin to suspect that they were thieves, having been warned of such, or rather that they were spectres of the night, who, as we were afterwards told, are frequently seen in these

places. . . . But fortunately our guide soon after sounded his horn, and we followed the sound, turned down the left hand road, and arrived safe to our companions."

It was not only for travelling but for sending of letters that the Queen's subjects tried to use her post service. In 1566, the Queen's Secretaries complained—

"There are so many that assume unto themselves authority to send and direct pacquets, and that so daily, that when Her Majesty's letters are sent, they are the less regarded."

But it was not possible to prevent people from using such a convenient arrangement as a regular means of carrying letters. Little by little there began to be a regular traffic in letters. Little by little the royal posts were used by private people. Ordinary letters like those of the present day began to be written often. Business by letter became possible. No alteration in methods of trade is more important than this.

A second change was taking place. Just as the comparative safety of the countryside allowed craftsmen to live outside towns, so it permitted single travellers to risk themselves even with a pack of goods, far more boldly than before. And so the pedlar became more important to country people than he had been, because he came more regularly and more often. The pedlar was a poor man living, when at home, in a little cottage. He bought his little stores of lute strings, paper, ribbons, pins and needles, and knives, in some country market. Shakespeare lets his pedlar, Autolycus, sing—

"Lawn as white as driven snow
Cypress black as e'er was crow,
Gloves as sweet as damask roses,
Masks for faces and for noses,
Bugle bracelet, necklace amber,
Perfumes for a lady's chamber,
Golden coifs and stomachers,
For my lads to give their dears,
Pins and poking sticks of steel,
What maids lack from head to heel."

Another pedlar sang—

> " Fine knacks for ladies, cheap, choice, brave and new
> . . . . . .
> " I keep a fair, but for the fair to view !
> . . . . . .
> Within this pack are pins, points, laces, and gloves,
> And divers toys, fitting a country fair."

There were still but few towns where a printing press was at work ; but some pedlars lived near such a town and they carried ballads printed on single sheets of coarse paper, and sometimes pamphlets of a couple of pages each. A London gentleman sent a friend some satires, which he called playfully " Pedlar's pamphlets and three ha'penny trash." So the pedlar gave the country people a chance to buy goods which formerly they had fetched from the town, or gone without.

The wandering pedlar could not be supervised in the same way as the man who sold his goods at his stall in a market. But he needed to be controlled in some way. So he had to be licensed. The Justices of the Peace granted the licence. The Justices, too, could take the licence away. From time to time the Privy Council sent down orders for a revision of licences. Then the Quarter Sessions must have been attended by many pedlars, some prosperous and confident, others ragged and timid.

But greatest of all the changes in internal trade were those which resulted from the increasing demand for food. More food was needed, first because of the growth of population in a time of peace, secondly because many men no longer grew wheat and stock for themselves. Moreover, with higher standards of efficiency, some people began to see that local scarcities, such as had happened frequently in all previous periods, might sometimes be avoided by careful arrangements.

Just as the beginning of the cloth trade meant the rise of

the draper, so the extension of the food demand led to the appearance of two new traders. One was the higgler, the man who sold small wares to country people, and bought butter and eggs and cheese and poultry from them. He was usually in a very small way of business. The second was the "badger," "bodger," or "loder." The badger often started very humbly, even as an ordinary pedlar, and then began to specialise in the purchase of corn. Then he got into a larger way of business. He could be seen in the country town on market days. He went from stall to stall, buying corn, with a quicker, more businesslike manner of dealing than the chatty, slow, country people. He also bought more corn than any of the other marketers. As the husbandman fastened up the sack he had just sold to the badger the latter often said, "Carry it to my chamber at the Bell, where I lay up my corn, and, if you bring me in ten measures more of corn in the week next coming, I will buy it." Duly, if he could, the husbandman brought him his ten measures, before the week was out. Now this meant that before the next market day that particular husbandman would have sold all his surplus corn, and perhaps would not come to market at all. During the week the badger or loder rode through the district, buying corn from the farmer at his barn door and sometimes actually going down with him to the ripe harvest fields and buying the corn before it was cut. Then when the local folk came to market the corn was not there; it had been carted away already to the loder's sheds, and there it was awaiting his pack-horses or his barges, for it was destined for London.

Thus the corn loders bought merely to sell again. In law in those days this was a misdemeanour, called "regrating." Often, too, the loder bought outside the market on market day, and this was illegal, for it was "forestalling the market." Yet the work of the corn loder was actually needed. London must

be fed; Bristol and other big towns must be fed. Nor was corn dealing left uncontrolled. The Sovereign and the Privy Council kept watch. The Sheriffs and the Justices of the Peace had very often to send reports on the corn that came to the local markets. Many of these reports still exist, for instance a whole set written in May, 1586. In them the Justices of Gloucester and Berkshire told the Council how they had licensed a certain number of badgers, for they considered them profitable members of the Commonwealth. The Justices of the Peace for Devon, too, had licensed badgers. The Justices of Bedfordshire explained that they had divided up the county and allotted each division to one Justice, who saw that every one there sent to open market whatever corn he could spare. Sometimes the Council praised the Justices, sometimes they blamed them, sometimes they bade them inquire further into rumours that So-and-so had kept back his corn from market. For "the market must be furnished." Empty corn bins on market day, angry householders, market towns not thronged by farmers—pictures of this kind constantly rose before the eyes of the Councillors, as things to be avoided at all cost. And sometimes such sights were actually to be seen in midland and home-county towns. Especially was this the case for miles round London. From East Anglia, Cambridge, and Huntingdon, through Hertfordshire and Essex, came great waggons of corn, grinding their wheels into the roads and making furrows three and four feet deep. Pack-horse bells tinkled along the green lanes; slow strings of barges passed down the sea coast; all were burdened with food stuffs for London. And westwards, as far as Reading, the London demand made itself felt. When the Justices reported a scarcity, the Privy Council checked the business of the corn dealers. They ordered the Justices and Sheriffs of counties to send up the names of all "forestallers

and regrators" of corn. The Justices inquired at Quarter Sessions, who had bought up corn, and sent up the names to the Council. Then the Councillors sent for the delinquents, and they appeared before them, and were scolded or merely told to cease buying. But often they were threatened and yet not punished. For the Councillors knew that the corn dealer fed the noisy, hungry, wealthy Londoners. So, though they bullied him, they let him trade and thrive. The corn

FIG. 20.—A covered four-wheeled waggon. (From a drawing made soon after 1544.) Such carts were still rather unusual. This one is copied from part of a drawing representing a military camp.

dealers became rich,* and the corn trade became the most important branch of internal commerce.

BOOK LIST

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Joyce, H. ..	History of the Post Office	*R. Bentley & Son.*
Pratt, E. A. ..	A History of Inland Transport	*Kegan, Paul & Co.*
Bourne, H. R. Fox	English Merchants ..	*Chatto & Windus.*
Cunningham, W.	Growth of English Industry and Commerce	*Cambridge Univ. Press.*
Walford, C. ..	Fairs Past and Present ..	*Elliot Stock.*
Bland, A. E., and Tawney, R.	Select Documents Illustrating English Economic History	*G. Bell & Son.*

* "*Oh, I know him, Sir, he is a fool, but reasonable rich, his father was one of these cornmongers.*"—("*London Prodigal.*")

CHAPTER VIII

FOREIGN TRADE

During the Tudor Period, England's position as regards foreign trade became quite different from that which she had always held before. Hitherto, the known world had ended on the European shores of the Atlantic. Therefore the Island of Great Britain had been on the outskirts of the world, on a road leading nowhere. Then came the discovery of the New World, and the gradual conquest of its gold mines and silver mines, its jewels and its raw materials, for European commerce. As these things were brought to Europe, England found herself in the middle sector of the new Atlantic trade routes. Moreover, since the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope,* trade with India had gone round the western and southern coasts of Africa, instead of by the eastern ports of the Mediterranean.† For the Cape route, English ports were better situated than the old Hansa ports of North Germany and the Gulf of Finland, and better situated, too, than Venice or Genoa. Little by little England learnt that she was in a first-rate position for the routes to India and the New World. With the discovery of these routes the foundation of England's great commerce was laid.

But it was only very, very gradually that the English

* *See Chap. I.*

† *See Chap. I. From about* 1520, *one of the old overland routes to India, the one through Egypt, was blocked up by the conquest of Egypt by the fierce Turks.*

merchant learnt to understand these new facts. Early in the sixteenth century Portugal held the new route to India,* Spain the new route to America, and France was attempting to find a way to India by the north-west.† Throughout these years, however, English merchants living abroad were hearing from foreigners stories of new lands discovered. One Englishman, Robert Thorne, traded in Seville for many years. In 1527 he wrote to King Henry VIII.—

"Now I, considering your noble courage, and also perceiving that your Grace may . . . with little cost, peril, or labour, amplify this your realm, I know it is my bounden duty to manifest this secret unto your Grace, . . . which is, that with a small number of ships there may be discovered divers new lands, . . . in the which, without doubt, your Grace shall win perpetual glory and your subjects infinite profit. To which places there is left but one way to discover, which is into the north, for out of Spain they have discovered all the Indies and seas occidental [*i.e.* Western], and out of Portugal all the Indies and seas oriental."

He drew a map of the new land, and sent it with the letter. (*See map at the end of the book.*)

Such exceptional merchants as Thorne saw that the discovery of new lands meant the finding of new places in which to sell English goods and buy foreign ones. But English sailors and merchants made no great voyages or discoveries as yet. Nor until the religious troubles of Mary's reign drove men out to sea did many merchants come to understand the truth of such ideas as Thorne's. It was only in the second half of the sixteenth century that they began great undertakings.

In this chapter we shall see the older bodies of merchants, the Staplers and the Merchant Adventurers, working on in

* *See Chap. I.*

† *Cartier was sent out by the French King in* 1533. *He discovered the estuary of the St. Lawrence river, and explored part of its course, and part of the coast in his attempt to find a new route to India.*

their old ways. Then we shall see English merchants entering on the new, distant fields for commerce, and in so doing binding themselves together in a new way, in a kind of association more like a modern company than anything which had existed among Englishmen before. Lastly, we shall see how merchants entered into the social life of their time as country landlords and as important men in their own towns.

About the year 1500 the wool staplers of Calais were carrying on their businesses as of old, but they were getting even greater trade advantages than they had had before. In 1506 Henry VII. forced the rulers of the Netherlands to free the staplers from certain tolls.* Yet by the middle of the sixteenth century English staplers were less prosperous than they had been. They could not buy wool very cheaply in England, for the local clothier often bid for wool against the stapler.† Nor could they sell it so dear in Flanders as they had done, for Spaniards were now offering large quantities of Spanish wool, which excelled English wool in fineness and in length of lock. Moreover, after about 1555,‡ Flemings were weaving less cloth every year, for political troubles were keeping their hands from the loom.

While the export of English wool diminished, the export of English cloth increased.§ This trade was carried on by

* *For a short time they were even allowed to sell their goods by retail themselves. Henry gave no corresponding advantage to Netherlands merchants in England. They therefore called this treaty the Bad Intercourse.*

† *See Chap. VI.*

‡ *In* 1555, *Charles V.* (*see p.* 145) *abdicated, and his son, Philip II., husband of Mary of England, became ruler of some of his lands, which included the Netherlands. He set the Inquisition to work; in* 1567 *he placed the Duke of Alva in command of a Spanish army to occupy the Netherlands and enforce the Catholic form of worship. William of Orange began to fight in* 1568. *In* 1581 *the men of Holland and Zeeland threw off the yoke of Spain and established the United Provinces.*

§ *See Chap. VI.*

bodies of "Merchant Adventurers." It was early in the fourteenth century that Englishmen began first to take English cloth to Holland and Brabant. They went singly, as wool merchants had done at first; and each one was called a "Venturer." The numbers increased; in some ports, such as Lynne or Newcastle-on-Tyne, there were soon enough to form a little society, or "fellowship." The rules of the Newcastle "Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers" have survived. The members came to a monthly meeting where they made these rules for themselves, and punished offenders. Each Adventurer might have two apprentices, and no more. They brought their new little apprentices to the meeting to introduce them and pay their entrance fees. Seven years later the apprentice came again to enter formally as an independent Venturer. No merchant might take a partner who did not belong to the fellowship, nor might he trade abroad as agent for any man. Such were the rules at Newcastle; and at London, Hull, Lynne, Exeter and a few other ports, fellowships existed which were probably much like this one.

The Newcastle Venturers grew busier * as the fifteenth century advanced. Yearly they bought more and more of the local cloth—"Northern kersies," Kendal cloth, Coventry whites, and Lancashire "cottons" (coarse cloth made of poor wool). They traded with towns on the German coast, and even with Bergen, in Norway. They brought back iron, and flax, and hemp, and tow, and wax. Only a very few sailed from Newcastle to the Low Countries, to Middlesburgh, Bergen-op-Zoom, or Antwerp. But when they did they found

* *They bought sheep skins and lamb skins in Gateshead, wool, skins and hides in Newcastle, wool and woolfells in the market towns of the Durham moors. For in* 1505 *and* 1550 *Henry VII. and Henry VIII. allowed them to ship wool to Calais and sell it there, in spite of the staplers. They bought lead from the mines in Upper Teesdale and Upper Wharfedale, and fox skins from the fells of Durham and Northumberland and Yorkshire.*

other Englishmen selling English cloth there, and nine out of every ten of these was a Merchant Adventurer of London.

The London "Adventurers" had not traded at first under that name. In the fourteenth century, when the cloth export from London began, it was the mercers who carried it on. Sir Richard (Dick) Whittington, a mercer, sold much cloth "beyond seas" in the time of Henry IV. All Londoners who wanted to do so joined the Mercers' Fellowship. But the special cloth export increased; soon the exporters began to call themselves "Merchant Adventurers of London," and separated from the Mercers' Fellowship. Then they tried to make all other English Adventurers join their society.* In 1407, Henry IV. allowed all the English merchants who traded in "Holland, Zealand, Brabant, and Flanders" to choose one of themselves to govern them. It was probably London Adventurers who asked for this grant in their desire to make all Adventurers join with them. At last, in 1497, Parliament allowed them to enforce the London rules on other Adventurers; and, in 1505, the King, Henry VII., confirmed this arrangement, and permitted them to choose a governor, and to compel every Adventurer to obey their rules and enter their fellowship. He gave the Londoners the stately name, "The Merchant Adventurers of England."

So now the Newcastle men had to pay dues to the London fellowship,† for leave to "come as Adventurers" to the two great fairs held at Antwerp, St. John's Mart and Wool Mart, and to all the depôts of the London Adventurers.‡ Edward III. had ordered the Adventurers to sell their cloth at Bruges only.

* *In* 1391 *all Englishman trading to "Prussia" (the south-east Baltic coast) were formed into one society. So, too, in* 1408, *were all Englishmen trading to Scandinavia.*

† *Similarly the Merchant Adventurers of York, Norwich, Hull, Ipswich, and Exeter became branch societies of the London company.*

‡ *These depôts were Middlesburgh, Embden, Bergen-op-Zoom, Antwerp, and Bergen in Norway.*

They did so until 1444. By that time Bruges had lost many of its old advantages. Its harbour at Zwijn was silting up. Its weaving industry was declining, and because of this, fewer foreign merchants came thither than before. So the Adventurers sought a new place for their depôt and the best of all was clearly Antwerp. The navigation of the Scheldt was being improved very much. The men of Antwerp wanted to attract merchants; they offered the Englishmen

FIG. 21.—Antwerp about 1570. (From a drawing published in 1575.) 1. The Market Place. 2. The English House. 3. The Portuguese House. 4. The Town Hall.

a great house and privileges. Duke Philip, the ruler of the Netherlands, also offered them privileges.

So the Merchant Adventurers moved their depôt to Antwerp—

"Antwerp made great suit to [*i.e.* begged] the Company to repair thither, which they finally upon offer of very large . . . privileges obtained. . . . There were then in all the town not above four merchants, and those also no adventurers to the sea. . . . The rest of the townsmen were but mean people, . . . and did let out the best of their houses to

Englishmen and other strangers for chambers and packhouses, . . . but within a few years the concourse . . . of foreign merchants was so great that house room waxed scant, rents were raised, tolls—and all other duties—wonderfully increased. Then their old rotten buildings, covered with thatch, were pulled down, their waste ground . . . turned into goodly buildings of fair streets. Thus prospered those of Antwerp, so that in our memory that now live the said town was grown to such wealth, strength, and beauty, as never none the like in so short a time."

So wrote the Secretary of the Company in 1601.

But his explanation of the prosperity of Antwerp is not the whole truth. It was really due, first, to the discovery of the new sea routes and the gradual decay of the older overland routes. Antwerp was the natural meeting-place of Eastern and Western Europe. The Portuguese had become the chief brokers of oriental "spices" to Europe. In 1516 they came to Antwerp and settled at the "Portuguese House," in Kipdorp Street, near the Great Market, [see Fig. 21] and the "Bourse," or Exchange. This Exchange had been built by the men of Antwerp in 1460, as a place where all merchants of any nation might meet freely and talk business. This free intercourse, hitherto to be found only on fair-grounds, was the mark of a new commercial life which sprang up in Antwerp. Lastly, Antwerp had this advantage, that the Netherlands passed in 1506 to Charles, son of Duke Philip and of Joanna, heiress to the throne of Spain. In 1516 Charles became King of Spain, and in 1519 Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire; * and so, in the first half of the sixteenth century, the merchants of Flanders, Spain, and Germany all looked for help to the same man.

The "English House" at Antwerp was a great quadrangle of warehouses and dwellings. The Adventurers in residence there lived under the jurisdiction of the governor, an Adventurer elected by the rest to rule the company. He lived in Antwerp permanently. He sat in court, regularly, with other

* *Portugal was united to Spain in* 1580.

merchants also elected to decide quarrels between the merchants and their customers. He and his "assistants" made rules fixing the prices of cloth, and the sizes and weights per piece of each kind of cloth. Any merchant who broke these rules was fined. If an English Adventurer was wronged, the governor went to the town authorities, or even to the great noble who governed the Netherlands for the King of Spain, and protested. The governor wrote home to the King's chief minister, to Cardinal Wolsey under Henry VIII., or Secretary Cecil under Elizabeth, and explained the wrong, and asked for help. Similarly, a subordinate governor ruled over each depôt of the company. Wherever the Adventurer traded, his company protected him.

Twice in the year a great six-weeks' fair was held at Antwerp. One began on the second Sunday before Whitsun, and was called St. John's Mart, the other, on the second Sunday after the Assumption (August 25), and was called the Mart of St. Bavon. Each was held in the old churchyard of the Cathedral, where wooden galleries had been built in a square like a cloister, and the fair extended, too, into all the neighbouring streets. Here the English merchants sold—

"white cloths, coloured cloths, kersies short and long, cottons, northern dozens, and divers other kinds of coarse cloths. . . ."

They made their purchases too.

"Of the Dutch and German merchants they buy Rhenish wine, . . . copper, steel, . . . kettles and pans, . . . linen cloth; of the Italians they buy all kinds of silk ware, velvets, . . . satins, damasks, Milan fustians, cloth of gold and silver; . . . of the *Easterlings* [Hansa merchants], flax, hemp, wax, pitch, tar, corn, furs, calres, tallow . . .; of the Portingales all kinds of spices and drugs . . . of the Low Country merchants . . . tapestry, buckram, linen . . . cambric, . . . lawns."

Thus the arrival of Adventurers' ships in the Port of London meant the restocking of London grocers' shops and mercers

and chandlers' shops, and of taverns, too, with Rhenish wine.*

Hitherto these goods had always been sold in London at the great old "Steelyard," whose three arched doors had opened ever since the thirteenth century to privileged German merchants, the Hansamen or Easterlings. The Adventurers hated these men, for old charters, confirmed by Edward IV. in 1474, allowed them to export English cloth, and actually to pay lower customs duties upon it than English merchants! Besides, in the reign of Edward IV., the Hansamen had obtained a great house adjoining the old Steelyard on the east, and there, in the Hall, they began to sell Rhenish wine by retail, as their old charters allowed them to do. With the wine they sold divers relishes—ox tongue, smoked salmon, salted sturgeon and caviare, and "Dutch bun." London citizens and their wives quickly got a great liking for these delicacies, and the old hall was often quite crowded. It was like a popular restaurant nowadays. Adventurers must sometimes have gone there with parties of friends, but their dislike of their rivals may have spoilt the flavour of the wine. Again and again the Adventurers complained to the Privy Council that the Hansamen had privileges which injured Englishmen.

In 1550 the Privy Council attended to their complaints, and in 1551 they ordered the Hansamen or Easterlings to pay the same duties on cloth exported as English merchants did, nor might they import the goods of any country but that land from which they themselves came. Now this was a fatal blow, for their own native towns were only, as it were, depôts for goods which the Easterlings had conveyed from the depths of Russia, from distant Scandinavia, or across the Alps from Italy. So as this rule was enforced, fewer ships of the Easterlings

* *For the causes of commercial decline in the Netherlands, see p.* 141, *note.*‡ *In* 1578 *the Spaniards sacked Antwerp. Then the Adventurers left it, and made a depôt at Hamburg.*

came sailing up the Thames; in the warehouses of the Steelyard the floors and shelves were less crowded with goods. Customers became fewer. The two side gates were closed up permanently. Again and again the Easterlings begged the Privy Council to reconsider their case. On the Continent they opposed the English merchants everywhere. At last, in 1597, they persuaded the Emperor to banish English merchants from all his territories—countries which roughly coincided with the modern Belgium, Germany, Bohemia, Austria. Then Queen Elizabeth ordered the Hansamen to leave England. With their departure ended at last the dependence of English people on foreign merchants for the import of foreign goods.

While the Merchant Adventurers of London were trading busily with Antwerp, the old local societies, now branches of the main body, were trading in other directions. The Society of Merchant Adventurers of Exeter had grown up towards the end of the fifteenth century. In the country round Exeter kersies were being made from the wool of the moorland sheep and were brought to market in Exeter. On market day, from the overhanging timber-framed houses, out came the Periams and Hursts, the Dorchesters and Jurdens, Burroughs and Martins—grave and wealthy men—each with a clerk beside him and an apprentice behind, and they took their way to the market. There each Adventurer bought his cloth and his servants stored the bales in his cellar, where tons of cloth lay awaiting shippage. Some merchants owned vessels. In 1566 Master Thomas Martin was part owner of the *Mary Martin*, lying at anchor in the little port some way below the town. Beside her lay the *Michael*, the *Bartholemew*, and other ships, but these belonged not to merchants but to Exeter shipowners. These ships were hired out to merchants. The Exeter sailors knew the sea ways to the ports

of France and Spain and Portugal in which the merchants sold their cloth. They went to Morlaix and St. Malo and Paimpol in Brittany, and Brest and Rochelle, and returned with Brittany canvas, and dowlas, and towel. They went to Spanish and Portuguese harbours and returned with raisins, figs, sack, and sherry. We do not know exactly to which port Master Martin was sending his cloth. He shipped some tons of it in his own ship and hired place for the rest in the *Michael* and in the *Bartholemew*. The master of each ship brought the bill of lading to the governor of the merchants at the Merchants' Hall in Exeter so that he might see that all dues were paid. The bill of lading of the *Michael* ran—

"The *Michael* of Exeter: Mr. William Hunte, 6 Ton, T. Martin, 2 ton, Mr. Morris Sevenmore, 2 ton, J. Hutchins, 2 ton, . . . George Periam, 2 ton, . . . Mr. J. Midwinter, 2 ton, . . ."

and so on. Thus each merchant bought his goods and shipped them at his own discretion; he also received from his agent abroad whatever profit his own particular goods brought in. Each Venturer traded at his own risk and in his own way. But all were bound together by obedience to the governor and to the rules of the society. They went together to a religious service yearly; they kept a common feast on the day when they elected their governor and his assistants; they met frequently in their court, and there they made rules and punished men who broke them, received new "freemen" after due apprenticeship, and sat in judgment upon men who tried to practise their trade without having joined the fellowship. They were so anxious to enforce the rule that none should trade in Exeter without belonging to their society that in 1559 they petitioned the Queen and her Privy Council to confirm it in a royal charter. An old Adventurer, Mr. Robert Midwinter, was mayor at the time,

and he explained to all the townspeople what was being done. He said—

"Forasmuch as to be an Adventurer is not only to be subject to the perils of the seas, but do also require a more exact knowledge in itself than other trades doth, . . . therefore their Honors [of the Privy Council] thinking not good that every unskilful person should attempt this trade . . . will not that any should attempt the trade of such adventuring unless he were first skilful therein. . . . Their wisdoms therefore having so fatherly a care of us would not we should attempt the thing which might turn us to decay and ruin, and yet, notwithstanding, their Honors exclude not every person from adventuring, but only such as are unfit, or unapt; but if any will be an Adventurer, let him sue [ask] to be of this company."

During the sixteenth century the merchants of the Exeter Company were growing rich. It is said that the volume of their trade was quadrupled between 1560 and 1600. So great was the foreign demand for English cloth.

During the sixteenth century the Merchant Adventurers represented the survival of the old ways and the old trade of the fifteenth century. But in the second half of the sixteenth century England attempted to trade in new ways and in new regions. The new spirit was working in their minds. In 1586 the merchants of Exeter subscribed to equip John Davis' expedition "to China and Cathay," and the men of Barnstaple watched Grenville's ship sail over the bar for "Wyngandecora" [Virginia]. In London, in 1552—

"certain men had taken upon them a voyage by sea into far countries, to the intent that between our people and them, a way might be opened to bring in and carry out merchandises . . . as well to seek such things as we lack as also to carry unto them from our regions such things as they lack."

These men belonged to the London Adventurers' Company. Each subscribed £25, making up £6000 in all. This sum was

" one common stock of the company " ; each man joined in the common venture, but had no separate traffic of his own. The expedition was to find a way into " Muscovia " or Russia. The way to Russia up the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland was barred to Englishmen by the Hansa merchants and their privileges. There was a tiny strip of Russian coastline at the head of the Gulf of Finland, but there was no port among its frozen swamps. Russia was thus only accessible from the White Sea. Hugh Willoughby was put in command of three ships, the *Good Hope*, the *Edward Bonaventure*, and the *Good Confidence*. Richard Chanceler was second-in-command. In May, 1553, they sailed from Ratcliffe upon the Thames below London Bridge, past Greenwich and Tilbury Hove and Hollie Haven,* with victual for eighteen months in the holds of the vessels. Off the Norwegian coast Chanceler, in the *Edward Bonaventure*, lost sight of the rest in a storm. The other two ships were never seen again by English eyes. Blown at last into the estuary of the Argina, west of the White Sea, they were frozen fast. In the spring Russians found the frost-rigged ships and the frozen bodies of the crew.† Meanwhile, Chanceler had made the mouth of the Dwina and reached Colmogro, a Russian town a little higher up the river than the present Archangel. Then Chanceler had travelled nearly 1500 miles—

" a journey," he wrote later, " very long and most troublesome, wherein he had the use of certain sleds, for they [the Russians] are carried themselves upon sleds, the cause whereof is the exceeding hardness of the ground by the force of the cold, which in those places is very extreme and horrible."

Chanceler reached Moscow. He wrote—

" The Mosco itself is great. I take the whole town to be greater than London with the suburbs, but it is very rude [roughly built] and standeth

* *A creek at the west end of Canvey Island (Essex), now called Hole Haven.*

† *Some had been still alive in January, 1554, as their letters showed.*

FIG. 22.—The Kremlin, Moscow. (From a book published in 1575.) "Moscow is a place of 40,000 inhabitants, rich in silver. It is so enclosed with strong forts that no one, native or foreign, can come in or go out without letters from the Duke. . . . The citadel is in the middle of the town; it has 17 towers and 3 outlying forts. There are 16 churches in this citadel, of which 3, St. Mary's, St. Michael's, and St. Nicolas', are built of stone, the others of wood." So Moscow is described in this book. The whole "citadel," within the wall shown here, is called the Kremlin. It contained the Tsar's Palace (marked A on the map). This palace was destroyed long ago. The great Bell Tower called Ivan Veliki (marked B) still stands. The great churches within the Kremlin (such as the Cathedral of the Assumption, marked C) are inaccurately placed by the maker of this map. The Kremlin is now entirely surrounded by the rest of the city, of which it is only a very small fraction. Its white-washed wall and green towers are celebrated in Russia. It is the heart of Old Russia.

all without order. . . . The Emperor's or Duke's * house, neither in building nor the outward show, nor yet within . . . is so sumptuous as I have seen. . . . It is very low built in eight squares, much like the old building of England, with small windows, and so in other points. Now to declare my coming before his Majesty. . . . When the Duke was in his place appointed, the interpreter came for me into the outer chamber where sat one hundred or more gentlemen all in cloth of gold very sumptuous, and from there I came into the Council Chamber where sat the Duke himself with his noblemen which were a fair company. . . . He himself sat in a chair gilt, and in a long garment of beaten gold with an imperial crown upon his head, and a staff of crystal and gold in his right hand, and his other hand half leaning on his chair."

The Tzar bade him to dinner and the cups and dishes of massy gold and the crowds of people in cloth of gold did make some impression on Chanceler. Then the Englishman petitioned the Tzar for freedom to trade. While waiting for his answer Chanceler found out that the Hansamen had a settlement at Novgorod. He found out, too, that Russia, vast as it was, produced raw materials in enormous quantities; at Moscow, corn and salt fish could be bought; at Novgorod, flax and hemp, hides, honey and wax; at Colmogro, furs of sable, martin, beavers, hares and fox, walrus ivory, salt fish, train (whale) oil.†

"The town of Vologda," he said, "is meetest for our merchants because it lieth amongst the best towns of Russia, and there is no town in Russia but trades with it. . . . Our merchants may do well to provide for the Russes such wares as the Dutch [German] nation doth serve them of, as Flanders and Holland cloths, which I believe they shall serve better and with less charge than they of Riga or Dorpat or Revel [Hansa towns], for it is no small adventure to bring their cloths out of Flanders to either of these places, and their charge not little to carry them overland to Novgorode."

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* *The rulers at Moscow had been called Grand Dukes since they became subject to the Mongol chief, "The Khan of the Great Horde." In the second half of the fifteenth century, the Grand Dukes began to conquer lands southward and northward. Early in the sixteenth century, Duke Boris took Smolansk and brought his boundary up to Poland. In* 1553 *Ivan the Terrible captured Astrakhan. Already in* 1478 *the Grand Duke had refused all homage to the Khan. Ivan the Terrible took the title "Tzar" [Cæsar, Emperor] just before Chanceler arrived.*

† *Train=trân, the old German word for fish oil.*

At last the Emperor Ivan caused his letters to be written to King Edward VI.—

"If you will send one of your Majesty's council to treat with us, whereby your . . . merchants may (come) with all kinds of wares, they shall have their free mart [market] . . . through my whole dominions."

With these letters* Chanceler reached home in the spring of 1555, to find King Edward dead, Queen Mary and King Philip on the throne, and no news of Sir Hugh Willoughby.

Quickly the merchants acted. They obtained a royal charter which recognised them as the Muscovy Company, with sole right to trade with Russia. The charter allowed them to elect a governor with four "consuls" and twenty-four assistants, to hold courts, make regulations, admit new members, and fine the disobedient. On May Day, 1555, the old *Edward Bonaventure* put out again under Chanceler, her hold full of wares, and Master Killingworth and Master Gray, the company's first agents, on board. Arriving at Moscow in September Killingworth set to work. He discussed with the Russians whether the English settlement ought to be at Colmogro or at Vologda or both, and he set up store-houses at the landing place in St. Nicolas' Bay. The goods he had to sell were such as filled the four ships sent to Russia in 1557, and of these an account still exists.

"You shall receive, God willing, these kinds of wares following, all marked with the general mark of the company, . . . 25 fardels [bales] containing 207 sorting cloths, one fine violet, . . . and one scarlet, and 40 cottons [coarse woollen cloths] for wrappers. . . . More, 500 pieces of Hampshire kersies, that is, 400 watchett [sky blue], 43 blue, 53 reds, 15 greens, 5 ginger colour and 2 yellows. . . . More, 9 barrels of pewter, of Thomas Hasel's making. . . . You are to receive our said goods, and to procure the sales for our most advantage. . . . Let the chiefest lading of these four ships be principally in wax, flax, tallow

* "*In letters much like to the Greek letters,*" . . . *with a German translation.*

and train oil, . . . for we do purpose to ground ourselves chiefly on these commodities."

The company sent out also seven ropemakers, coopers to make barrels for the train oil, and ten merchant apprentices to learn the new trading ways, and an explorer to find out a way to Cathay.

Thus the methods of the Muscovy Company were quite different from those of the Merchant Adventurers. Each of the latter sent out his own goods at his own risk, for his own profit or loss. But it was "for the company" that sales were made in Russia. No member took his own independent venture. The stock was the joint stock of all the partners. When the work was so far off the partners had to leave it quite to their agents. Thus a company was born much more like a modern company, with its shareholders and its management, than any that had gone before.* Several such companies were formed before the end of the century.

It was as a member of one or other of these companies that the Elizabethan merchant grew rich. As he prospered he became an important figure in the social life of his town. He built a beautiful house like those in Fore Street, Exeter, or

* *The Levant Company was formed in* 1581 *to trade with "the dominions of the Great Turk"* [*Egypt, the Holy Land, Asia Minor, the Balkans, Hungary*]. *After* 1587 *the Venetian trade fleet never came to England again, for the Levant Company imported the goods it had brought. At its foundation the Levant Company was a joint stock company; but in its active days in the seventeenth century it worked as a typical regulated company of the old sort. The Africa Company began its voyages to Guinea and the Gold Coast in* 1553. *It consisted of five chief Adventurers of whom each had partners. In* 1601 *the East India Company, the greatest joint stock company, was formed.*

Mermaid Street, Rye. He furnished it with carved oaken furniture, tapestries, Persian carpets, Venetian glasses, massive

FIG. 23.—Sir Paul Pindar's House, in Bishopsgate Street, as it was in 1875. Sir Paul Pindar was a very rich merchant who traded with Turkey and the Levant. He built this house soon after 1600. This front is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.

silver vessels. Middleton, a dramatist, has sketched a merchant, Sir Alexander, in his pride. The scene represents

his "parlour." He comes in out of the dining-room after dinner with his friends, Sir Davy Dapper and Sir William Appleton, and two gentlemen, Goshawk and Laxton, who are all thanking him for their good dinner.

"ALL: Thanks, good Sir Alexander, for our bounteous cheer.
SIR ALEX.: Fy, fy, in giving thanks you pay too dear.
No more of thanks, no more.—Ay, marry, Sir,
The inner room was too close; How do you like
This parlour, gentlemen?
ALL: O, passing well.
SIR WILL.: What a sweet breath the air casts here—so cool!
GOS.: I like the prospect [view] best.
LAX.: See how 'tis furnisht!
SIR DAVY: A very fair sweet room.
SIR ALEX.: Sir Davy Dapper,
The furniture that doth adorn this room,
Cost many a fair gray groat [a fourpenny piece] 'ere it came here.
. . . Some wine! Some wine!
Where be those knaves I keep?
SERVANT: At your worshipful elbow, Sir!" *

Sometimes, no doubt, a merchant showed off his furniture too much. But merchants were trained in good manners by the rules of their fellowships, as well as by experience abroad. At Newcastle, Adventurers were fined if they forgot to bow to the governor as they entered the room, or if one interrupted another. Abuse was an offence; so, too, was quarrelling.

When a merchant had a fine house what was to be his next investment? Over and over again different merchants made the same choice. They bought land. A poet wrote in 1550—

"So soon as they have aught to spare,
Beside their stock that must remain,
To purchase land is all their care
And all the study of their brain.

"The farms, the woods, the pasture grounds
That do lie round about London
Are hedged in within their mounde,
Or else shall be 'ere they have done." †

* *Middleton, "The Roaring Girl," Act I. sc.* 1.
† *Alexander Crowley, Eclogues*, 1550.

It was not only so round London. The City merchants bought lands in distant counties. In *The London Prodigal*, written about 1605 by a nameless dramatist, the extravagant young heir inherits from his father, a merchant—

> "Three ships now in the Straits and Homeward bound,
> Two lordships [estates] of two hundred pounds a year,
> The one in Wales, the other Gloucestershire,
> Debts and amounts . . . plate, money, jewels,
> Two housen furnished well in Coleman Street." *

Merchants bought land, first, because there were then no undertakings in which they could buy shares and receive regular yearly interest, except the very few joint stock companies mentioned on p. 155. Only from land could a man get a regular yearly return. Secondly, many a successful merchant had played in youth in his father's fields and woods.

> "Merchant Adventurers young men, . . . servants or apprentices, . . . for the most part are gentlemen's sons, or men's children of good means and quality,"

wrote the Secretary of the Adventurers in 1601. After years of trade "and knowledge of the manners of strange nations" the merchant wanted to become what his father had been and his elder brother was—the owner of land; so he went back to the country. He bought monastic lands from the King, or he heard of some impoverished gentleman who must sell his estate, and gave him a great price, and so the merchant became a country squire. But his mind was no longer like his elder brother's. The latter was perhaps considered a good farmer because he had enclosed some pasture for his oxen, as Fitzherbert recommended; but his thoughts moved slowly. The merchant's mind still moved at the quick pace of Antwerp Mart or Blackwell Hall. When an old countryman came to him to renew a lease he thought, "The

* "*The London Prodigal.*" *Anon.* 1605, *Act II. sc.* 4.

price of corn is rising," and raised the rent. The countryman did not always understand his thoughts and dealings. Often the merchant got a bad name as a landlord. A poet, Crowley, wrote in 1550—

> " Since they take farms,
> To let them out again,
> To such men as must have them,
> Though it be to their gain,
> And to levy great fines *
> We must needs call them
> Members unprofitable,
> As men that would make
> All the realm miserable."

But the merchant left his son wide lands and much money. His daughter might marry a nobleman's son, be called " my lady," and leave Temple Bar and the City gates behind her.

By the end of the sixteenth century, Englishmen were beginning to make use of the new advantages brought them by England's geographical position. They had not yet found out that they had the best place of all for the distribution of oriental and East Indian goods to Europe; but they had learnt to go out adventuring and soon the other discoveries were to follow.

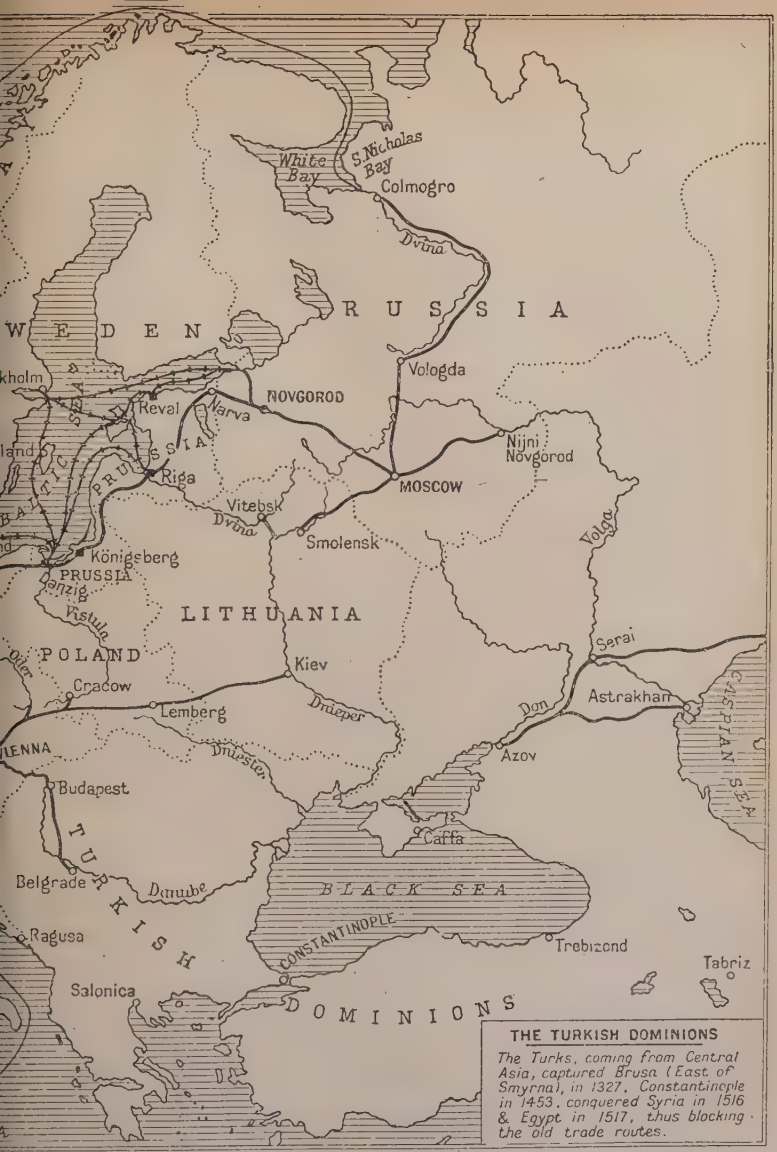
Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Lindsay, W. S. ..	History of Merchant Shipping	*Sampson Low & Co.*
Hakluyt, R. ..	Principal Navigations ..	*J. M. Dent & Son. (Everyman Series).*
Scott, W. R. ..	English, Irish, and Scotch Joint Stock Companies, vol. i.	*Cambridge Univ. Press.*
Cunningham, W...	Growth of English Industry and Commerce	,, ,, ,,
Hannay, D. ..	The Sea Trader ..	*Harpers.*
Bourne, H. R. Fox	English Merchants ..	*Chatto & Windus.*

* *Sums payable on obtaining a lease or tenancy.*

George Philip & Son, Ltd.

MAP 6.—Map of EUROP



The London Geographical Institute

owing TRADE ROUTES.

CHAPTER IX

CHANGES IN PARISH LIFE 1509–1558

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Church still played a part in the lives of men which it is perhaps difficult for us to realise. For one thing no real breach had as yet occurred dividing mankind into Roman Catholics and Anglicans, church-goers and chapel-goers. A few heretics lurked here and there in obscure corners, but the natural thing to do with them was to hunt them out and burn them, just as witches and practisers of black magic were hunted. Normally every child that was born was baptised in the font of the parish church, every young couple were married before its altar; under the old yew trees of the quiet churchyard every one, as he came to die, was laid to rest.

The Church's feasts were still her people's holidays; their pageants were her gorgeous processions with priest, cross and candles; their dramas were her mystery and miracle plays performed often within the church or churchyard. On Rogation Days she blessed their crops. Her stately Latin language was familiar to their ears from childhood; some even of its phrases crept into their every-day speech. The fabric, the vestments and the images which were the symbols of her teaching, were their gifts. When they made their wills they did not fail to leave cows or sheep for the parish stock, rich clothing or costly bed-coverings to lie before the altar.

Every feast or fast had still its appropriate symbolism. The sprinkling of ashes on Ash Wednesday, and the bearing of palms on Palm Sunday, were concrete ways of teaching the lessons which the Church wished to bring home at those seasons; the solemn pageant when a dead man was borne to burial, with scutcheons and purple pall and dimly burning tapers, followed by a long train of poor folk praying for the departed soul in return for doles of bread and ale and black cloaks, reminded the merchants and their portly wives, and even the thoughtless apprentice-boys who came out with bared heads at the sound of the mournful dirge, of the uncertainty of life and the vanity of riches. The duty of meeting bands of weary pilgrims at the city gates, and helping them on their way to the next town with money, or escorting them to the costly shrine in the parish church where they fell prostrate before the wonder-working relic of saint or martyr, reminded stay-at-home people that faith without works is dead.

Men still believed that clerks when they received Holy Orders became divinely ordained mediators between God and man, with power to hear confessions, order penances and forgive sins. To mark them off from the rest of the world they wore a special dress and were forbidden to marry. At the Ordination Service the bishop gave the newly made priest a chalice containing consecrated wine, and a paten or plate with a wafer of consecrated bread upon it. This was a sign that a priest's most sacred duty was the celebration of the Mass. At this great service the Church taught that in answer to prayer the bread and wine became the actual flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. The fact that none but a priest could perform this sacred mystery further separated him from other men. Moreover he alone had access to the Bible which he read in the Latin translation known as the Vulgate; for

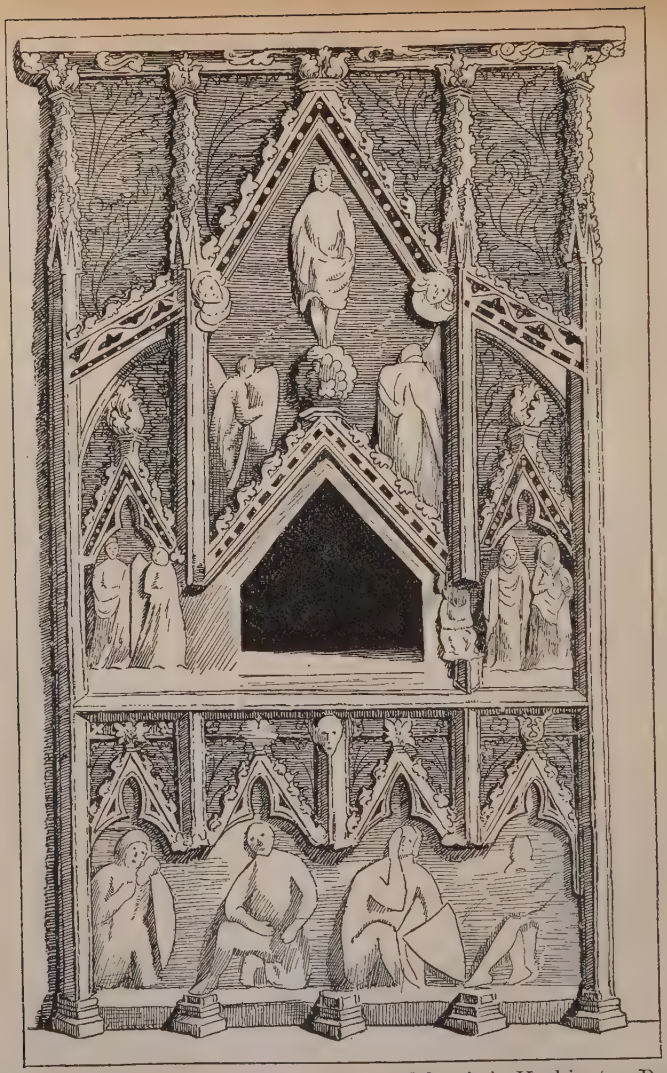


FIG. 24.—An Easter Sepulchre. This sepulchre is in Heckington Parish Church, Lincs. Its date may have been late in the fourteenth century. It is made in the north wall of the chancel. In it were laid the crucifix and the pyx, containing the Consecrated Host, on Good Friday. Lights were kept burning before the sepulchre, and a man watched before it, until the very early hours of Easter morning. Then the priest removed pyx and crucifix to the high altar, to the sound of hymns. Thus the people saw, as it were, the story of the Resurrection enacted. The sepulchre at Heckington shows Our Lord arising, the soldiers asleep, and the women coming

though it had been translated by Wycliffe and others, the bishops believed that these translations were full of mistakes, and would mislead men if they were allowed to read them. It was still therefore left to priests to teach their flocks by sermons, pictures and ritual.

A Venetian visitor to England in 1500 says of the people—

"They all attend Mass every day, and say many Paternosters in public. The women carry long rosaries in their hands, and any who can read take the office of Our Lady with them, and with some companion recite it in church verse by verse, in a low voice. . . ."

A primer written in 1538 exhorts men thus—

"First, rise up at six o'clock in the morning at all seasons and in rising do as follows: Thank our Lord who has brought you to the beginning of the day. Commend yourself to God, to our Lady Saint Mary, and to the saint whose feast is kept that day. When you have arrayed yourself say in your chamber or lodging, Matins, Prime and Hours,* if you may. Then go to the church before you do any worldly work . . . and abide in the church the space of a low mass time, where you shall think on God and thank Him for His benefits."

Such was still the ideal which the Church set before her children; but both priests and people often fell short of that teaching in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as they had fallen short in the days of Chaucer and Wycliffe. Here and there devotion had waned and men used the stones of the chantry chapel to build a sluice against the floods, and the lead from its roof to make water pipes. Elsewhere noblemen kept chaplains dressed in gay liveries. These men acted as stewards, and went hunting and hawking with their master and his boon companions. There were still idle chantry priests who wore short cloaks and daggers like laymen, and spent their time dicing and playing cards in alehouses. Many men were critical of these things as Chaucer and Langland and the

* *According to the ancient teaching of the Church prayers should be said privately or in common eight times a day—Matins at midnight or cock-crow, Lauds at sunrise, Prime on rising, Terce, Sext and None at 9 o'clock, mid-day and 3 p.m., Vespers at sunset, Compline at bedtime. These little services are called the Hours.*

Lollards had been. The Englishman of the sixteenth century, however, travelled more than his forefathers; he carried on a brisker trade with foreign countries, and could buy printed books instead of depending on the old expensive manuscripts of the monasteries. Thus criticism and discontent spread more widely and quickly.

Some began to say that many of the images and relics to which pilgrimages were made were fraudulent, that the blood of St. Thomas of Hales was really the blood of a drake, that the Rood of Boxley from which the figure of Christ bowed its head, was worked by mechanical means, that the money spent on velvet, damask and satin, and on gold and silver gifts at shrines would be better given to the poor. It was even hinted that the souls of the dead could not be helped by the prayers of the living, that therefore chantry chapels and Masses were of no avail.

In the Universities, too, a new movement was on foot. Towards the end of the fifteenth century scholars from Oxford and Cambridge travelled to Italy in order to learn Greek, which had become almost an unknown tongue in Western Europe. They were thus able to read the Gospels in the language in which they were written, instead of in faulty Latin translations. In 1510 Colet, the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, founded a school for boys where both Latin and Greek were taught. As early as 1498 the great Dutch scholar Erasmus had visited England and had become the friend of Colet and of Sir Thomas More. He longed that even the weakest woman should read the Gospels in her own tongue, that the husbandman should sing portions of them to himself as he followed the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of the journey.

These men and others like them were faithful sons of

Holy Church; they wanted, however, to bring her teaching as near the truth as they could by basing it on newly discovered knowledge, just as scholars to-day are studying the Bible in the light of modern scientific and historical thought. More timid men feared lest the old teaching and the old authority of the Church might thus be shaken. They hated these scholars and called them the "Men of the New Learning."

Amid this stirring of thought and criticism King Henry VIII. found his opportunity. Though he was ambitious and unscrupulous he was yet the friend of Sir Thomas More. This friendship led him to respect the scholarship of the men of the New Learning, and to sympathise with their desire that all should have access to an accurate translation of the Bible. He was well trained in the orthodox teaching of the Church, and defended her doctrines against Luther. His common sense, however, was revolted by fraudulent relics and by any failure of the clergy to live up to their profession. Above all things he cared for power and wealth. It seemed to him absurd that money should flow out of England to a distant Pope who was unable or unwilling to force the clergy to give up their idle lives, or to teach the people to be devout without being superstitious. He had no doubt that he could himself do what the Pope failed so lamentably to accomplish. When at length in 1531 his wishes were thwarted in the matter of his divorce from Queen Catherine, he forced Convocation to give him the title of "Supreme Head of the Church." This new title was subsequently confirmed by Parliament. Henceforth priests and people were to look to the King and the two Houses for direction instead of to the Pope. Henry made Thomas Cromwell his Vicar-General. Cromwell's duty was to advise his master, and carry out his injunctions, with regard to the Church. He was clever but unscrupulous and greedy, and used his position largely to enrich himself. In

1533 Cranmer, a very different man, devout, scholarly and over-sensitive, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1536 Henry, Cromwell and Cranmer together issued instructions known as the Ten Articles. These bade the clergy eschew taverns or alehouses, cards and other unlawful games, and devote their leisure to the study of the Scriptures. They explained that images are symbols to remind men of the saints, not idols to be worshipped. They taught that while it is lawful to call upon the saints to aid our prayers, it is wrong to regard them as more ready to hear or more merciful than Christ. Subsequently the blood of St. Thomas à Becket, preserved as an object of pilgrimage at Canterbury, was declared to be a "feigned thing made of some red ochre," and the wonder-working Rood of Boxley was brought to Maidstone and its mechanism exposed before a gaping crowd. Finally a number of Church holidays were abolished because they led to idleness.

The greatest boon, however, which these three men bestowed upon their countrymen was the English Bible. In 1536 the King issued injunctions that a copy should be chained to the reading-desk in every church. At last every one who could might spell out that store of wisdom, of poetry and of history for himself; even the unlearned and simple might gather in the dim aisles while some one more skilled than themselves read aloud from its pages. Thus for the first time English men and women entered into a heritage which in subsequent centuries coloured their thought and language, and became a storehouse of inspiration, consolation and precept. Many men, not content with reading their new treasure in church, bought copies for themselves, from which they might read to their children and neighbours, gathered round the open fireplace after the day's work was done.

But Henry had let loose a torrent for whose force he was

scarcely prepared. Filled with desire to discover truth for themselves these new scholars sought through the pages of the Scriptures to find what they taught about Purgatory. They sought in vain. There was no mention of any intermediate state of growth between this life and heaven or hell. They began to ask themselves therefore whether the Church had deceived them in this and perhaps in other matters. In no long time men and women, old and young, merchants and craftsmen, in Bristol, in London and in the south-eastern districts of England, were undertaking to expound the Scriptures, and claiming to be able to "oppose the best priest in the parish, and tell him he lies."

One writer laments—

"In our days even the chiefest and most weighty matters of our religion and faith are called in question, babbled, talked, and jangled upon (reasoned I cannot nor ought not to call it). . . . In this way, both by preaching and teaching (if it so ought to be called), playing, writing, printing, singing, and (oh, good Lord!) in how many other ways besides, divers of our age, being their own schoolmasters, or rather scholars of the devil, have not forborne or feared to speak and write against the most excellent and most blessed sacrament of the Altar, affirming that the said Sacrament is nothing more than a bare figure, and that there is not in the same Sacrament the very Body and Blood of our Blessed Saviour . . . but only a naked sign, a token, a memorial and remembrance of the same." The King himself thus complained in 1546. "The commons rail on Bishops and speak slanderously of priests, and rebuke and taunt preachers. . . . And although you be permitted to read Holy Scripture and to have the word of God in your mother tongue . . . it is licensed you so to do only to inform your own conscience and to instruct your children . . . and not to dispute . . . I am very sorry to know . . . how unreverently that most precious jewel, the Word of God, is disputed, rhymed, sung and jangled in every alehouse and tavern."

To the very end of his reign Henry remained faithful to the essential doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. He believed that Christ is actually present in the consecrated bread and wine at the Mass. He held that priests receive miraculous power at the time of their Ordination, setting them

apart from other men. Except in the south-eastern counties the majority of his people, moreover, were of the same mind. When a certain country squire rode about with a train of preachers, declaiming in remote villages against the ancient faith, the peasantry were scandalised. Old priests who had been brought up to preach four times a year, were horrified at the "new learned men" who thought nothing of delivering formal sermons, two or three times a week. It had been a comparatively easy thing to transfer the rule of the Church from foreign Pope to English King. But apart from this a strong conservative instinct made King and people alike cling to the ancient ways of thought, the old familiar forms and ceremonies.

With the accession of Edward VI., however, the Reformers looked for a speedy triumph. The boy King was under the guardianship of his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, who sympathised with the men of the New Learning.

He believed that lights and images distract men's thoughts from the worship of God; he thought that men are predestined at birth by God to heaven or hell, that therefore Masses for the dead are useless, and chantry chapels only a means of providing idle priests with a source of livelihood.

Thus it came about that in the early days of 1547 the sound of hammer and axe was to be heard in many a church. The parishioners coming in on the following day missed the great crucifix from the rood beam,* and the carved figures of Mary and John, while a few days later they found the rood loft

* *The rood beam was the great beam of stone or wood spanning the chancel arch and bearing in the centre the carved figure of Our Lord upon the Cross or Rood and on either side the Virgin and St. John.*

painted with Scripture texts, and discovered that images had been removed from their niches and that the candles which had glimmered before them had all gone. A little later children were found playing with the images in the street. "Jugge or Tommy, where did you get that pretty idol?" says the mother in a contemporary sermon, "John, our parish clerk gave it me," answers the child.

Next came the news that Parliament had dissolved all the chantries and given to the King their property, and all the property which the gilds used for such purposes as maintaining lights and Masses for the dead. Commissioners were sent round the country to make inventories of the gild and chantry lands. It was said that the proceeds would be used to found new grammar schools. Some of the old chantry schools were indeed maintained, and a few new ones were established. The greater part of the money, however, found its way into the pockets of courtiers and politicians. Moreover, the Commissioners did not only confiscate the property which had been used for the "superstitious" purpose of maintaining lights and Masses, they also laid hands on the funds which had endowed chantry schools or had been used for various charitable purposes.

So it came about that in many a parish the vicar lost the help of the chantry priests who had acted as curates. If the chantry lands were sold the little school had to be closed. There were fewer Masses because there was only one priest left to celebrate, and moreover the altars of the chapels had been hacked and defaced. In Bury St. Edmunds it was complained that there were three thousand "houseling people * and a great number of youth," and that with the dissolution of the chantries it was left to two parish priests to visit and teach them all. In places where gild lands had been

* *Communicants.*

seized on the plea that their profits were used to keep a lamp burning in the church, the gilds frequently fell to pieces. They lost the subscriptions which had been used to support a little almshouse, to dower poor maidens, or to relieve members who through fire or shipwreck or other misfortune had fallen into want. With the fall of the gilds, too, the mystery plays and processions, and the other pageantry of peasant and middle-class life, dwindled and eventually ceased. The law had deprived men of many of their holidays; its influence now contributed to make those that were left comparatively drab and uninteresting; the prohibition of the ceremonial use of ashes, palms and candles in church, deprived the great fasts and festivals of much of their significance to simple minds.

But if some men were moved to violence in the zeal of their newly liberated reason, others amongst the Reformers kept themselves untouched by the passions of the hour. Though Somerset himself believed the stern doctrine of predestination, and exhorted parents to keep their children from such idle games as bowls, tennis and quoits, yet he did not wish to force other men's consciences. Rather he used his influence in the direction of moderation. Equally moderate was Archbishop Cranmer. By patient study and a slow process of painful conviction the Archbishop had gradually moved from the ancient Catholic standpoint to the reformed position. He believed that at the moment of communion Christ imparts His presence spiritually to the faithful. The miracle takes place not upon the altar through priestly mediation, but immediately by faith, in the souls of men. The priest thus becomes merely the human minister of the things of God, the altar a communion table, rather than the setting of a miraculous drama. Hence he abandoned the mitre and the cross which distinguished him as bishop, and the eucharistic vestments in

celebrating the Mass. Yet he would not force others to do the same. An old writer says of him—

"This indeed was the constant behaviour of the Archbishop towards papists . . . : his opinion was that clemency and goodness, as it was more agreeable to the Gospel . . . so was it more likely to obtain the ends he desired."

To his moderation and his reverence for the past the Church of England largely owes the dignity and beauty of its Prayer Book. This book, as we know it, really consists of five parts. These were not new forms of service invented by the Archbishop. All of them come of an ancient lineage. Before the Reformation the most important books in use in the Church services were the Breviary, the Missal, and the Pontifical and Manual. In essentials these service books were common to the whole of the Western Church, but in detail they varied from country to country, and even in some cases from diocese to diocese. In England the form most largely used was that of Salisbury or Sarum, often called the Sarum Use ; but there were also others—such as the York, Lincoln and Hereford Uses. The work of Cranmer was to choose what he believed to be the most beautiful and most true portions from these various books, to combine them with certain other ancient prayers and with some of the forms used by the Reformed Churches of the Continent, and to translate the whole into English. Being a master of prose-writing at a period when the English language was most dignified, he bequeathed to later generations a book unsurpassed for sonorous beauty of expression. In actual doctrine the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. authorised in January, 1549, still implied that Christ was spiritually present in the bread and wine when blessed by the priest in the Eucharist. It ordered the use of copes, albs and tunicles at Mass,* it allowed such symbolic

* *The alb is a white linen garment reaching to the feet and girt round he waist with a girdle. The tunicle is a shorter garment fringed at the edge*

actions as kneeling, crossing or knocking upon the breast and holding up of hands, according to each man's conviction.

As was only natural in these early days of transition, considerable confusion prevailed. Already in November, 1548, priests had been given leave to marry. Some did so,

FIG. 25.—A priest in a cope. (From the brass of J. Mapilton, in Broadwater Church, Sussex.) The cope is the long mantle bordered with embroidery and fastened with a clasp on the breast. The pattern, made up of roses, maple leaves, and the letter M, bears allusion to the name of this priest, John Mapilton. He was rector of Broadwater, and died in 1432.

FIG. 26.—A priest in an alb. (From the brass of William Byschopeton, in Great Bromley Church, Essex.) The alb is the undermost garment of the two. It was a long white garment, worn by priests at Mass. Hanging down over it are shown the ends of the stole. The upper garment is the chasuble, which was also worn at Mass.

others remained celibate on principle. Among the dignitaries of St. Paul's, London, both the old and the new learning were represented—the conservatives followed Bishop Bonner, while the reformers were lead by the dean. The new Prayer Book

and often open part way up the sides, originally also of linen but later of richer material. The cope is a long cloak, often richly embroidered, worn over the alb by the celebrant only.

was first used in the Cathedral in Lent, 1549, many months before it became legally obligatory.

On the Sunday after Ascension Day, gazing up the dim aisles to the distant choir, men suddenly realised that though the celebrant wore a cope, the canons were vested only in white surplices and academic hoods and the petty canons in surplices and black tippets.

Nevertheless, though the chantry priests had been dismissed, men of the old way of thinking, creeping in at the familiar hours, still occasionally found a private Mass being sung at some remote altar. On September 1, 1549, Bishop Bonner, when ordered by the Privy Council, "to set forth certain Articles," at Paul's Cross, suddenly changed his discourse into a solemn defence of "the corporeal presence in the Lord's Supper," and a fortnight later, being in the Cathedral during the preaching of a sermon attacking the Real Presence, he rose from his place in the face of all the congregation and walked out of church.

Elsewhere some men shut their shops and kept holiday on Sundays and holy days, while others worked all day, even on Ascension Day. Some clergymen refused to use the new service books or gabbled in such a way "that the people have not that delectation in the same that to good Christians appertaineth." Some laymen being unable to hear Mass in their own churches attended in the church set apart for the use of the French Ambassador or for other foreign congregations. When Reformers were sent to preach the new doctrines at Stepney, the old vicar was in the habit of having the bells rung, or beginning to sing in choir before the sermon was half done. He was even known to challenge the preacher in the pulpit. In the summer of 1549 the men of the West, incensed by the new service book, whose classical English was stranger to their Cornish ears than the familiar Latin

phrases of the ancient missal, rose in revolt. They demanded the restoration of the ceremonies of Ash Sprinkling and Palm Bearing and the Blessing of Holy Water, and declared that the new book was "no better than a Christmas game."

Up and down the country, justices at assizes, schoolmasters in the schools, priests in the confessional, and stewards in the manorial courts, strove to keep alive the old faith.

The fall of Somerset at the close of 1549 brought into power men who were less willing or less able to stem the tide of change. Northumberland, the new Protector, was a man whose Protestant convictions covered an over-mastering desire to lay hands upon the wealth which still remained to the Church, in order to pay the debts of an extravagant government. A plan was set on foot to sub-divide the great bishopric of Durham and to distribute part of its vast lands between the newly created sees of Hexham and Newcastle. In the course of the transaction, however, large estates were to fall to the Crown. What remained of valuable Church plate, gold, silver, copper and jewels—even the very lead from the roofs of churches and chapels was seized, and sold to replenish the empty exchequer.

Encouraged by this example more honest Reformers preached a crusade against stone altars. Their total destruction was ordered, and soon up and down the land masons were at work cutting them out of their places, and defacing their exquisite carving. They were replaced by plain wooden communion tables which could at need be removed into the middle of the choir or nave. Bishop Ridley of London himself superintended the removal of the high altars and all the altars of the side chapels of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Some zealous laymen, not yet satisfied with the rate at which the ancient teaching and the symbols of the ancient faith were being destroyed, took matters into their own hands.

Edward Underhill, courtier and soldier, hailed the vicar of Stepney before Archbishop Cranmer for his contumacious doctrine, and on another occasion burst into the church of Stratford at Bow and seized the copper pyx containing the reserved Sacrament * off the altar.

Cranmer himself was falling rapidly under the influence of the learned foreigners who found entertainment beneath his hospitable roof at Lambeth. Consequently the Prayer Book of 1552 differed from that of 1549 in that it left no loophole for those who still desired to use some vestments, and definitely taught that the Holy Communion is simply a commemoration of the Last Supper. The Order of the Administration was also altered. Thus it became impossible for priests of the old way of thinking, by mumbling the prayers and using the ancient gestures, to make the new service appear like the Latin Mass.

The triumph of the Reformers was, however, short-lived. On July 19, 1553, Mary, the King's Roman Catholic sister, came to the throne. On September 3 the parish register of Much Wenlock records—

"On this day I, Sir T. Butler, Vicar of this church . . . celebrated divine service and also Mass in Latin, in the old way, and according to the use of Sarum, by the Authority of the Most Excellent Virgin Mary our Queen . . . as other curates of this deanery, and of the churches of the County of Salop have done."

Then followed a period of great activity on the part of carvers and painters, church embroiderers, silver-smiths and

* *At the Mass some of the consecrated wafer was "reserved" or set aside for the subsequent communion of the sick. This was kept in a vessel called the pyx which stood or hung above the altar. In the course of time the reserved Sacrament—believed to be the actual body of Christ—became an object of devotion before which the faithful offered prayers. Reformers therefore objected to it for the same reason that they objected to images.*

book-binders. Rood beams and roods were put up again, vestments were repaired or new ones embroidered; new Latin service books, candlesticks and a new pyx were purchased. Early in 1554 the edict went forth in London that every one should bear palms on Palm Sunday and go regularly to confession. In May the Queen went in solemn procession about the Court of St. James' Palace, and the people gaped to see Bishop Bourne of Bath arrayed in a mitre, a pair of slippers of silver gilt, and a pair of rich gloves with "great owches of silver upon them." A great hunt was instituted for married priests. One Sunday early in November a curious crowd assembled to see a little group of these delinquents, clad in the white shirt of penitents, each bearing a taper in one hand, and a white rod in the other, do their penance, by walking before the procession at St. Paul's. A few weeks later the two Houses of Parliament decided to return to the obedience of the Pope.

FIG. 27.—A Priest in academic gown. (From the brass of William Tabram, in Royston Church, Herts.)

But if some men rejoiced at the restoration of the old order, and others like the penitent priests changed their opinions with the times, there was at least a considerable minority who had courage to suffer for their faith. This was especially the case in the south-eastern counties and in London. In June, 1554, a rumour got abroad that the priest of the parish church of Charing Cross was still singing the Litany in English. He was seized and thrown into Newgate Prison to be a companion for thieves. As late as September of the same year in Ipswich, only two priests were to be found willing to

serve eleven churches according to the ancient rites, and in all Suffolk very few were forthcoming.

In July, the Queen was married to the King of Spain, and on August 26, when Philip was leaving for the Continent he and Mary passed through London to the Tower Wharf with a procession such as had formerly delighted the good citizens. First came the stately figure of Bishop Gardiner, Lord Chancellor of England, with the Great Seal borne on a cushion before him, then Cardinal Pole in his gorgeous scarlet, preceded by a clerk carrying a cross. As they wound slowly through Chepe the cross-bearer looked to see the people lining the street fall upon their knees as his precious burden passed them, but instead they stood sullen and unmoved, with covered heads.

Personal and political misfortunes, and the unspeakable disappointment of finding that her people did not welcome the restoration of the old faith whole-heartedly, embittered Queen Mary. In 1555 heresy laws were enacted, making it incumbent upon the secular courts to burn any one convicted by the spiritual courts of unorthodox opinions. Incumbents suspected of reformed doctrines were turned out of their livings, and had hard work to earn their daily bread by peddling yarn between Salisbury and Reading, or some such laborious and humble toil. Others who more boldly adhered to the reformed faith were handed over to the secular courts, condemned and burned.

But persecution only kindled the zeal of these indomitable people. Foxe, the old historian of the Protestant Martyrs, tells us that when they were captured and condemned—

"some for triumph would put on their scarfes, some their wedding garments going to the fire, others kissed the stake. Some embraced the faggots."

George Eagle, called "Trudge-over-the-world," a tailor, to whom the Word of God had come as it came to Amos of old,

travelled hither and thither preaching, comforting and supporting those on whose courage the persecution was making great demands—

"for he (Trudge-over-the-world) wandering abroad into divers and far countries where he could find any of his brethren, did most earnestly encourage and comfort them, now tarrying in this town, and some time abiding in that certain months together, as occasion served, lodging sometimes in the country, and sometimes for fear living in fields and woods, who for his immoderate and unreasonable going was called Trudge."

A proclamation was issued in the counties of Essex, Kent, Suffolk and Norfolk placing £20 (between £200 and £300 of our money) on his head, but such was his own daring and the devotion of the people that for a long time he escaped capture. At last one day at fair-time in Colchester, a chance informer, casting his eye over the motley crowd, caught sight of the weather-worn features of the hunted man—only to lose him again the next moment. He felt, however, that he was on the scent. He watched and listened, bribed and threatened, and at length a few days later, inquiry brought him to a field of standing corn. Climbing a tree to get a better view he discovered his victim crouching in a corner and dragged him forth, to be eventually hanged, cut down alive, beheaded and quartered. The good folk of Colchester, Harwich, Chelmsford and St. Osyth, who had loved Trudge's homely eloquence and his indomitable bearing, were now to see the dismembered limbs of their prophet displayed as a warning in their market-places.

Such savagery rather moved men to sympathy and anger than to fear. When Thomas Mountain, the rector of St. Michael, Tower Royal, was arrested for continuing to celebrate the Communion Service according to the Prayer Book of 1552, and sent down from London to Cambridge for trial, he was received everywhere by enthusiastic crowds. At Ware a great number of people assembled in the town hall yard and

in the streets, some bringing wine to comfort him for which he gave them very hearty thanks and asked them to pray for him. His very guards, moved by his courage and patience, urged him to write to the Chancellor and recant, and offered to carry the message themselves. At Huntingdon he was brought to the house of the High Sheriff. He was at Mass, but being summoned came with his wife, the whole parish following like sheep. The Sheriff took Mountain by the hand and led him to the parlour to dry his clothes which were wet with the rain. Thence they went to dinner where the prisoner had great cheer, and was often drunk to by the Sheriff and his friends. On arriving at Cambridge he was thrown into prison until the Quarter Sessions, when evidently by connivance of the magistrates he was allowed to go free until Gaol Delivery,* if he could find two sureties. His irons were struck off, and he was turned loose into the streets. Here he stood "sore mazed" after his long confinement, while no less than six strangers clamoured for the privilege of going bail for him. Even after this his adventures were not over. He went to London to await his trial, but the emissaries of Bishop Gardiner renewed their pursuit of him. Fresh accusations were raised against him. He was forced to fly from place to place. Ultimately, staying in the house of "a nonest man," he was betrayed by a servant to the constables of the parish. They went straight to Mountain's host and warned him that they would have to search the house that night. Naturally when they arrived the bird had flown. It was with a true sense of the fitness of things that the constables

* *Quarter Sessions, was the quarterly meeting of the county magistrates before whom offences of a serious nature were tried in the first instance. Gaol Delivery, was a court held in the county town by judges sent down from London from time to time. Offenders charged before the magistrates might be committed by them to gaol until the arrival of the judges. The gaol was then "delivered" of its prisoners, who were tried and acquitted or awarded their appropriate punishment.*

arrested the informing servant, and put him in the stocks "to teach him to speak good of his master, and not to accuse him."

In the meantime Mountain escaped to Antwerp by boat, was relieved by the "English house" * there, and opened a little school. After a year and a half it was rumoured that the Governor of the English "nation" † in Antwerp was about to transport all such as had come over for religion. Mountain was obliged to escape to a free city of Germany. Here he remained until the death of Mary, when he returned to England "with joy."

The story of Mountain is typical of the condition of England during the later part of the reign of Queen Mary. At least two hundred and seventy-seven of the Reformers perished at the stake. Many, however, were saved by the help of the people. Sometimes the very officials would connive at their rescue; in spite of their own orthodoxy they were too much horrified by the persecuting spirit of the Government to lend a hand in the execution of the law. Of those who thus escaped many ultimately found a refuge overseas in Geneva or Zurich or the Protestant States of Germany. Others took to a sea-faring life, and by daring raids on the shipping of Roman Catholic States became the forerunners of the Elizabethan buccaneers.

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Pollard, A. F.	Thomas Cranmer	*G. P. Putnam's Sons.*
,,	England under Protector Somerset	*Kegan Paul & Co.*
Cox, J. C.	Churchwardens' Accounts	*Methuen & Co.*
,,	Parish Registers	,,
Dearmer, P.	Everyman's History of the Prayer-book	*Mowbray.*

* *See footnote p.* 145. † *I.e. Colony.*

BOOK LIST—*continued.*

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Gasquet, Monsignor, A.	English Church on the Eve of the Reformation	*G. Bell & Son.*
Latimer, H. ..	Latimer's Sermons ..	*J. M. Dent & Son.* (*Everyman Series*).
	First and Second Prayer Book of Ed. VI.	,, ,,
Leach, A. F. ..	English Schools at the Reformation	*Methuen & Co.*
Foxe, J.	Acts and Monuments ..	*Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.*

CHAPTER X

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES

When Henry VIII. came to the throne, the life of the Church was going on in England as it had done for many long years. The lives of cloistered monks and nuns followed in the old ways. Seven times a day they praised God in church as of old; daily the broken food was distributed to the poor, and still, whenever weary travellers came to the great gate, they might stay the night and eat in the guest house. Moreover, outside the monastery walls laymen still felt towards the monks much as they had done two hundred years before. Many laymen loved monks whom they knew; but many other laymen were making the old complaints against monks that had been common in Chaucer's day.* They were still accusing them of ignorance and laziness.

In many cases these two charges were well-founded. St. Benedict † had said that monks should sweep their own rooms, cook their own food, plough and reap their own fields and make their own clothes. But for a long time hired servants had been doing all these things for English monks. At Tewkesbury Abbey lived thirty-three monks who paid

* *See Book III. Chap. VIII.*

† *St. Benedict* (480–547) *had drawn up a "'Rule" for monks. The great Benedictine Order obeyed this Rule. From time to time men "reformed" the Benedictine Order to try to get back to its original spirit. Of the newer Orders the chief were the Cistercian* (1098) *and the Carthusian* (1084). *See Books I., II. and III.*

wages to one hundred and forty-four servants. At Durham the monks did not even sweep the church for themselves. There were only eleven monks at Biddlesden Priory (Bucks.), but they kept fifty-one servants to do housework and farm-work, just the hard, healthy work St. Benedict wished his followers to do for themselves. Each afternoon, from 12 to 5, monks should be learning, or writing, or copying old books. But now one monk often found a sunny seat and dozed there until the church bells began to ring at five; another took his hawk and called his dog, and went out into the fields, and both forgot their Latin. This loss was serious. It meant that such monks hardly understood the Church services. Besides, an ignorant monk would not even understand the Benedictine Rule, which was written in beautiful, simple Latin. A portion of it was read aloud every morning as a part of the ordinary routine of monastic life, in the daily assembly in the chapter house; but in some monasteries the monks had left off this usage. At Wymondham Priory, in Norfolk, in 1490, the monks hardly ever opened a book; they had no daily reading of the Rule, and they knew very little about it. Perhaps this was why they did not even sit in the cloister in the afternoon, but went out boldly, through gaps in the ruinous walls, with hawk and hound. Even where the Rule was read many monks were not careful to keep it. At Norwich Priory, in 1490, they talked in places where the Rule ordered silence to be kept, in the dormitory, and the cloister, and even in the church, and they sang the

FIG. 28.—A Dominican Friar. He is wearing the black, out-of-door gown and hood, which won the name, "Black Friars" for the order. Beneath he wears the indoor gown of white woollen cloth.

services very badly indeed. They let laymen come and dine with them in their refectory where no layman ought to have been, and they went in and out of the monastery freely, for the gate was never locked. In all these ways they were breaking the Rule.

Such monks could not help to enrich the library for they could not copy books intelligently. Learned books were mostly written in Latin. At Durham the monks sent to Newcastle for a professional copyist when they wanted a new copy of a volume.* Many houses were full of uneducated men. At Oxford, the Benedictines had two great houses, called Gloucester Hall and Durham Hall, and to these colleges each Benedictine monastery ought to have sent one or two monks; but in many houses there was no monk advanced enough in learning to be sent to Oxford. In addition to all these faults, the monks were in many places mismanaging their property.

So the novices who begged for admission into the Order became fewer. In all Buckinghamshire, about 1520, there was not one house with twenty monks in it.†

Against such faults in the monasteries the rulers of the Church had always had to struggle. Each monastery was subject to the inspecting power of the Pope. Periodically the Pope acted, through the Archbishop. He ordered a general inspection of all the monasteries. There was one such "visitation" in England in 1490–92, another in 1511, another in 1518. More frequently the Pope acted through the

* *At Woolstrope (Lincs.), in* 1535, *the monks did carving, painting, embroidery and engraving. They made their own clothes. No doubt some other houses were workshops of craft too; but certainly such houses were not numerous.*

† *Nuttey Abbey had about sixteen, Missenden Abbey about fourteen. Biddlesden, and four other monasteries, and the Friary at Aylesbury, had fewer than twelve. Newport Pagnell had six, and Ravenstone had only two, although its income was about seventy pounds. Two houses had been dissolved, in* 1460 *and* 1494, *because the Bishop saw that they were too poor to exist.*

Bishop of each see. The Bishop visited each Benedictine house in his diocese.* He was received by the Abbot and brethren in solemn procession, "bells pealing and organ sounding." He celebrated Mass in their church, and gave them his blessing. Then he inspected the buildings, and examined each monk privately and personally. Lastly, he drew up a report, and issued his orders, or "injunctions," to the Brethren. Usually he gave very clear directions upon each point which he wished to see altered. He fixed a definite time within which they must be carried out. The English bishops had been very careful to see that their orders were obeyed. At Norwich, in 1520, the monks were very unsatisfactory, and the Bishop told them that they would be visited again in six months' time, so that they might mend their bad ways in the interval.

A little earlier, another house, Missenden Abbey (Bucks.), had fallen into disorder.† In 1518 the Bishop came to visit it. He found that the monks were allowed to go into the town quite often and needlessly. They were keeping the church and buildings so badly that there was no lamp burning continually before the altar, and the monks' refectory was so tumble-down that it was not really fit to be used. But when the Bishop's deputy came again twelve years after, the Abbot had not improved; nay, the whole state of the abbey under his rule was much worse. He had never found out what income he ought to have as Abbot, but simply went

* *As a mark of special approval the Popes had freed certain Orders from the Bishop's visitation. They were to be visited only by their own authorities and by special Papal deputies. These "exempt" Orders were the Cistercian and Cluniac Orders, and the Orders of Friars. The Pope gave the same privilege to certain Benedictine monasteries as a mark of distinction. Westminster Abbey and St. Alban's Abbey were both "exempt houses." There were many others.*

† *During the Wars of the Roses, two monks claimed to be Abbot; one was supported by Lancastrians, the other by Yorkists* (1462–1482). *Bad ways crept into the abbey.*

on spending money as it came in. Too much was spent on good food. The monks owed £60. The buildings were more tumble-down than ever. The doors were always open and the monks could go in and out to the fields and to the village almost as they liked. One monk was accused of sin by the others, who reported the fact apparently with grief and shame. The Bishop's deputy ordered him to be kept apart from all the others until the Bishop could deal with him. Less than a year later the Bishop came to Missenden, found nothing put right, suspended the old Abbot from his office, and gave his orders to the monks in English, so that they might have no excuse for not obeying them. The faults which the Bishop found here were very like those found at Norwich Priory. Over and over again, idleness, carelessness and mismanagement were discovered.

Meantime a real change was coming over lay opinion about the monks. This change put a new vigour and importance into plans for altering the monastic way of life. The change was caused by the monks' wealth as landlords. Diminishing as their numbers were, they held lands of vast extent. For instance, the Prior of Worcester was lord of much land in Worcester Borough ; just north of it, the Priory owned a group of villages, Tibberton, Crowley, Bredicote, east of the Severn, and west of it, Grimley, Broadwas, and Hallow. Further south they held Cropthorn, Sedgebarrow, Netherton, Overbury, and Teddington. Almost touching these monastic lands was the town of Evesham, where Evesham Abbey owned much land. Quite close was Pershore, which belonged to Pershore Priory, as did the neighbouring village of Pershore Holy Cross. The very next village, Pirton, belonged to Tewkesbury Abbey. This Abbey lay on the Goucestershire border, and owned manor after manor in Gloucestershire and in Wales. Gloucestershire without the monks would have been

half ownerless. Westminster Abbey owned about one hundred and twenty estates scattered over England, including Staines with its bridge, Brentford with its ferry, and Battersea with its mills. Besides, it owned scores of Church livings. St. Alban's Abbey owned far more of Hertfordshire than did any other single owner.

As early as the end of the fourteenth century, in Wycliffe's days, men had actually proposed to take this land from the monks. In 1410, certain Wycliffite members of Parliament had petitioned the King to use such lands for other purposes. They had said : —

"Our liege Lorde the Kyng may have off [of] the Temporalities [worldly possessions] by Bisshopes, Abbotes and Priours y-occupyed, and wasted proudely . . . 15 Erles, and 1500 Knyghts, 6200 squyers [esquires] and 100 houses of Almesse [*i.e.* charitable foundations] mo [more] thanne he hath now, . . . and every yere . . . in clere to his Tresowr [*i.e.* an increase in his yearly income] £20,000 and more."

Nothing had then been done ; in those days such a proposal still seemed wrong to the majority. Many landowners were hardly rich enough to cultivate very much more land than they had at that time. For many years after the Black Death of 1349, it was not for more land but for more labour that landowners were crying out. But in the early years of the sixteenth century, it was not only for the sake of "the Realm and of the King" that men coveted Abbey lands. Gentlemen had never seen such profit got from land as they saw now.* They were hungering and thirsting for more land. They had never craved for land so greedily. From 1525 onwards, travellers coming home from Germany were telling what was going on there ; they told how German monks and nuns were leaving their monasteries and settling down as ordinary people in town and village, and how the rulers of the states of Prussia, and Saxony and Hesse had grown rich

* *See Chap. III.*

by taking the lands of the monasteries. Doubtless some Englishmen wondered whether here in England we should not do the same. It was on account of the land that the country gentlemen and rich citizens, the very men who might have clung to the old ways, the men whose ancestors had founded or enriched monasteries, were now ready, on the whole, to see the monasteries dissolved.

Moreover, pious men and women were looking thoughtfully at the monks, and wondering if there were not better uses for their endowments. As they themselves began to know something of the New Learning,* they valued knowledge, and especially the power to read the Bible, more and more. They began to think that the most important thing to do was to educate parish priests thoroughly well, so that they, in turn, could teach all parishioners well. This they thought was, perhaps, more important than the maintenance of monks and nuns. Many Bishops thought so. As early as 1437, Archbishop Chicheley had obtained the Pope's leave to break up five small monasteries, send their monks to larger houses, and give their lands to an Oxford College, All Souls, where poor students could be trained in priestly knowledge. In 1522, Fisher, the holy Bishop of Rochester, gave the lands of two little houses to St. John's College at Cambridge. Cardinal Wolsey wanted to make the parish priests well educated. In 1524 he obtained the Pope's leave to take the lands of small monasteries, to the annual value of 3,000 ducats† for his school at Ipswich and his College at Oxford. Among these small monasteries were Newport Pagnell, and Ravenstone,‡ and the little monastery of Tonbridge [Kent], where a few old monks were dozing away their lives. But the people of Tonbridge clamoured loudly. They said that they wanted the

* *See Chap. I.*

† *A ducat was worth about* 3*s.* 6*d. to* 4*s. It was an Italian coin.*

‡ *See p.* 186.

old monks, and, although Archbishop Warham himself tried to make them see that it would be far better to have a school for forty children, they stuck to their own opinion. Wolsey's plan developed in his mind. He thought there ought to be more Bishops to superintend the parish priests. He actually obtained leave from the Pope, in 1529, to carry out a further scheme, and to found new cathedrals by using monastic lands. The Pope thought it a good plan. So, too, evidently, did Henry VIII. He did not forget about it. Much later, about 1538, the King wrote out with his royal hand his own scheme for new schools and new bishoprics, to be endowed with monastic lands. Probably, he made this plan with a sincere intention that it should be carried out.* Such a use of monastic wealth was just what many people desired to see.

Owing to all these causes the minds of many English people were being prepared to support a great change, should such a change ever be made by the Government. And as the years went on, King Henry did make it. In the earlier years of his reign, possibly, he coveted the monastic lands, and buildings, and plate, and jewels, as other English gentlemen did. He certainly wished also to put the English Church into good order, and, for this purpose, to use the old endowments for the new bishoprics and schools he pictured in his mind. But he did not take the necessary steps. It was not until 1527 that a change in his own life led him into a quarrel with the Pope ; that quarrel in turn led him to think over the whole position of the English Church. Dissatisfied with it, he then, with Tudor determination and Tudor boldness, made all the changes, and more than all, that earlier generations had dreamed of.

In 1527 Henry began to wish to divorce his wife, Catharine of Aragon. For two years he tried to get the necessary leave

* *See p.* 208.

from the Pope, but in 1529 the Pope definitely refused to give it. Then Henry determined to obtain his divorce by leave of the English Church, and also to make that Church a national Church, independent of the Pope. He knew that he could obtain the support of Parliament. In 1529 Parliament began to transfer the Papal income and rights in England to the King. In 1531 the English clergy accepted the King as their "Supreme Head as far as the Law of Christ permits." In 1534 Parliament gave him all the Papal powers of governing the Church.* In the Act of Succession (1534) Parliament ordered that every man and woman should swear to his or her acceptance of the King's marriage with Anne Boleyn and of his Supreme Headship of the English Church. All through the end of the year, gentlemen commissioned by the King were hearing men and women, high and low, priest and lay, monk and nun, take this oath. If a man would not take it, that man was denying his support to the thing that the King thought most vitally important for himself and for the Church and the people. When the King heard that the Friars were stubborn and disliked to take the oath, he sent commissioners to them with the following form :—

"We . . . will always give full . . . perpetual . . . obedience to our Lord the King Henry VIII., and to the most serene Queen Anne his wife, . . . and to the holy matrimony had . . . and contracted between them, . . . and to the posterity of the said Lord King Henry by the said Anne . . .

Item, we hold as . . . established . . . that the said Lord Henry our King is the Head of the English Church. Item, that the Bishop of Rome who in his Bulls usurps the name of Pope . . . ought to have no more authority than . . . any other Bishop hath . . . in his own see. Item, that each one of us in his orations and prayers will pray to God first . . . for the King as Supreme Head of the English Church, . . . then for the Queen with her offspring . . ."

Every single Friar had to swear to these points, and to sign

* *By the Second Act of Annates, the Act "concerning Peter's pence," and the Act of Appeals.*

his name at the foot of a copy of the oath. The taking of the oath was all-important to Henry. It meant not only the acceptance of his marriage, but also the acceptance of his new work, the national English Church, which was to do all its work within England, and was to be governed by the English King. Henry would spare no one who would not take the oath. Three Houses of Friars * and the Carthusian Monks of the "Charterhouse" in London refused it; these houses were at once broken up, and four noble and learned Friars and monks were executed at Tyburn (May 4, 1535). Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More refused the oath; they were beheaded on Tower Hill.† Most of the monks took the oath, but often with murmuring and complaint. Henry believed that they were really in their hearts set fast against the new state of the law. Four years later, in November, 1539, the Abbots of Glastonbury and of Reading were charged with treason. Their treason was not clearly proved; but it was quite clear that both opposed the King's view of his lawful position. Each was executed in his own Abbey town. Next month, the Abbot of Colchester was condemned as a traitor and executed in London. His treason, too, was not clear; but he had said—

"I will not say that the King shall never have my house [*i.e.* monastery], but it will be against my will and against my heart, and I know by my learning . . . that it is . . . against the law."

It was because some monks would not and could not support the King's whole Church policy, and for the sake of the new English Church that Henry believed himself forced to dissolve the religious houses.

The combination of all these causes, religious, social and political, made the King act, and made most men support him.

* *The Observants of Richmond and Greenwich, and the Friars of Sion (Middlesex).*

† *Fisher on June* 25, 1535, *More on July* 6, 1535.

The King planned out the way in which the dissolution was to begin. At first he hoped that he was going to make a real

FIG. 29.—The Cloisters of the Charterhouse, London. The monks of the Charterhouse were Carthusian Brethren (see p. 184). They refused to take the oath of succession in 1534. They were thrown into prison; some were executed, including the Prior, John Houghton, in 1535. Many others died of hunger or disease, in prison. The buildings were granted to the Duke of Northumberland, and after his execution, to another courtier. They passed to the Earl of Suffolk, who sold them in 1611 to Sir Thomas Sutton, a very rich man, who founded and endowed a school and a hospital in them. The school, known nowadays as Charterhouse School, occupied the old building until 1872.

reform. By the Act of Supremacy (1534) the King became responsible for the good order of the Church, as the Pope had

been. He commanded Thomas Cromwell, his Vicar-General, to cause a complete visitation of all religious houses to be made. Cromwell appointed deputies, or "Visitors." To each he gave a written list of questions, and a written set of "Injunctions" to be used at all monasteries alike. The Visitors were grouped, and each group was told which district to visit. The whole of Southern England, East Anglia and the University of Cambridge, were assigned to Dr. Legh and John Aprice. They set off in July, 1535. Very soon Aprice began to dislike Dr. Legh. The latter was "young, and of an intolerable elation." He travelled with twelve servants, he was very rude, and he flew into violent rages.

The news of the Visitors' coming sometimes sped before them; sometimes it did not, and the monks had no warning even to come and meet them. At Warden Abbey (Bedford) the monks were going on in their usual way. The Abbey lay sheltered under beautiful woods, not far east of the Great North Road, near Biggleswade. Earlier monks there had been great gardeners; they had made two vineyards, and they had been the first to produce the fine "Warden" pear. But now the fifteen monks were very idle, and Abbot Henry, a simple man, could not keep them in order. Although he knew that they were idle and ignorant, and that five of them drank too much, and that they strolled about outside the walls as they liked, yet he could not alter them. He could not even get his own deputy the sub-prior to obey him. Once he had had to sit up in his chamber, watched by his servants, four nights running in fear, because he had displeased his monks and was so much afraid of them. Meantime, Legh, with his twelve servants, and the grumbling Aprice, were approaching along the Great North Road, having just finished at Royston Priory (September, 1535). Early one morning, with a rapping at the door and a trampling in the yard, Master Legh and

Master Aprice arrived. They dismounted, showed Abbot Henry their commission, and sent servants flying in all directions to bring the scattered monks to the chapter house. Then, in the King's name, they put their questions—

"Whether the brethren of this House do know the Rule ? . . . And whether they keep their profession . . . and in especial the 3 . . . principal vows . . . poverty chastity and obedience ? Whether ye do keep silence. . . . Whether ye do keep fasting . . . according to your Rule ? Whether ye have special license from your Master [Abbot] to go forth, or not ? Whether the Priors . . . almoners . . . or any such like offices having any revenues . . . do make his whole and true amounts ? . . . Whether the doors and windows . . . be diligently shut, so that no man have entry . . . at inconvenient times . . . ?"

Abbot Henry saw all the faults of his monks proved. But he saw too that these Visitors were bullying his monks, who had certainly bullied him, and he felt glad. At last the Visitors finished. Then they gave the Abbot the Injunctions—

"That no monk by any means go forth of the precincts.

"That at each [meal] some chapter of the New Testament or Old . . . shall be read . . . the brethren keeping silence and giving audience to the same.

"That every day, by the space of 1 hour, a lesson of Holy Scripture be kept, . . . to which all shall resort.

"That the abbot shall expound to his Brethren [each day] as plainly as may be, in English, a certain part of the Rule. . . .

"Also that the Abbot . . . shall make a full and true reckoning . . . every year to his brethren . . . as well of his receipts as expenses. . . ."

Moreover, the monks were to teach the lawfulness of the King's marriage with Anne Boleyn, and the falsity of the claims of the Pope.

Then the Visitors gave orders that Hugh, a young monk under twenty-four years of age, was to leave the House and go back to his friends. Finally, jumping on horseback, they trotted away with all speed. However, with the King's support, Abbot Henry felt strong enough to put his house in order. He made arrangements for this. But the brethren were boiling with rage, because they so resented being kept

within the monastery walls. Some weeks later the poor Abbot told his tale to Cromwell—

"The . . . brethren toke occasion agenste me thereat, and said amongst them that I was the cawser whi that thei wer enclossid within ther monasteri, to this entent, as thei didd imagine that I might do outwardeli what I wollde,* and they sholed not knowe it. From that tyme to this present daie thei have vexidd me with many uncharitable surmises and obprobrius wordes, to much and longe to be writen.

Item, that whereas wee . . . be commandid to have carlie lecture of divinite, we have none, and when it is redd, few or non of the monkes cum to it. Item, I did assign Dampne [Sir] † Thomas London to rede the divinite lecture and he undiscretele (unknowinge to me) did rede the bokes off *Eccius Omelies* ‡ whiche bokes be . . . off a brutale understanding. . . . And so sone as I had knowledge of their premisses, I toke from him his said bokes, . . . and discharged [dismissed] the said Dan Thomas off his reding and cawsed mi brother to rede the lecture, and then fewe or none of them wollde come at him. Item, for as muche as I did perceive ignorance was a greate curse whi that their my brethrene were thus farre out of goode order . . . I cawsed bokes of gramer to be bowghte for eche off them, and assignidd mi brother to enstructe thaim, but ther wollde come non to him but one Richard Balledok and Thomas Clement."

All this and much besides § drove Abbot Henry nearly out of his mind; he decided to resign, but did not do it.

Not all houses were unsatisfactory. The Priory of Catesby, lying in a fold of the low woody heights of Northamptonshire, was a house of nuns belonging to the Cistercian Order. The village with its nine little cottages, its wide fields, "so fertile that they seldom or never let it lie fallow," belonged to the nuns. The vicar of the parish church went up daily to the Priory to celebrate Mass. Old Thomas Banastre, the steward, took the rents and paid them to Prioress Joyce, the just, vigorous ruler of the house and its inmates. Her nine nuns were exemplary; they loved their life; at their gates occasional travellers in that lonely place were welcomed, and

* *I.e., in managing their lands and affairs.*

† *The title of Sir, or Dampne (=Dominus (Latin)) was given to priests.*

‡ *John Eck (1485–1543) was a theologian. Writing in Latin, he called himself Eccius. He was the foe of Luther. One of his works was called "Homilies against Luther." This is probably the book mentioned.*

§ *One of the monks was trying to get made Abbot in his stead.*

all the sordid troubles of the poor people round got whatever relief the nuns could give. When the King's Visitor came to the Priory, in 1535, he, too, was entertained with courtesy, and wrote as his report, "the Prioress and sisters are free from all suspicion."

In all religious houses the hasty visit of Layton, or Aprice, or Legh caused great trouble of heart. Country people probably took little interest in it, and did not understand at all that it meant a coming change. But the country gentlemen and citizens who went as members to Parliament were willing to give the King the smaller houses, thinking, probably, that this would enable the King to use the lands for better purpose, and to reform the life in the greater abbeys. In March, 1536, Parliament enacted—

> "That the Lords and Commons most humbly desire the King's Highness, that it may be enacted by authority of this present Parliament that his Majesty shall have . . . all . . . monasteries, priories, and other religious houses, . . . which have not in lands [and other possessions] above the clear yearly value of two hundred pounds."

Moreover, the King was to have any house which surrendered by its own will within a year. Parliament ordered that a Court (*i.e.*, a Government Department) should be appointed to manage the lands, and collect the moveable property. It was to be called the Court of Augmentations (*i.e.*, increases).

The court began work at once, long before anybody in the country really understood what was going to be done. Perhaps a country gentleman heard his first news of the passing of the Act when he received a royal letter commanding him to serve as a local commissioner to execute the Act. Three gentlemen in each shire were appointed, to co-operate with three officials of the Court of Augmentations. Of those chosen for Northamptonshire one was Edmund Knightley, of the family who owned Fawsley, just over the hill from Catesby, and lived there. He met the officials, and found they were

men much of his own class; George Gifford, the "Receiver" for the county, was son of Sir George Gifford, who held Claydon on a long lease from Sir Edmund Verney.* The Auditor, Robert Burgoyn, was of a county family too. The six Commissioners began work; they had to find out what the income of each house was, and to take possession of those whose income was under £200. Very early in May, 1536, they came to Catesby. The Prioress received them. She was elderly, very able, very much respected, and now, deeply moved. Already she had brought her case to the notice of Queen Anne, and had begged her to ask the King to let the house continue. She behaved with excellent manners, and she had everything ready. All the nine nuns were assembled in the chapter house. One of the gentlemen showed the King's commission with the waxen impression of the Great Seal hanging from it; next he asked the Prioress and her officials to lay their hands on the Gospel and swear to tell the truth. Then the Commissioners asked questions; they enquired how many nuns there were, how each one behaved, which ones wished to go to other nunneries,† how many servants they had; and they put many other questions about property, income and management. The nuns answered quite openly and honestly: they had twenty-six servants, and it was clear they all wanted to stay where they were. Then the Prioress sat down with Master Gifford to explain her management of the property; she gave him every detail, how she had let the manor of Over Catesby to a tenant, how she had £31 3*s.* 9¾*d.* in hand from her first half-year's rents, and she told him when she would be getting in the rents for the second half-year; she showed the dates of her leases, and proved that she had not sold away any of the common

* *See p.* 70.

† *In men's houses, the officials were asked how many of the monks were priests, and how many of them wished to take a parish living.*

property of the nunnery since the Act was passed in March. Her accounts were all there; she had put down even the money spent on the good dinner to be eaten by the Commissioners that day. Though she had had to borrow £46, she could show that nearly £37 were due to her very soon. Then the Commissioners took possession of the Convent Seal,* and all its accounts and title deeds. Perhaps it was not until the next day that they sent for the Prioress to help them make a complete inventory or list of every single thing in the house. Though old, she was energetic. But no doubt it was grievous work. They went to the church and entered on their list every piece of silver upon the altar, and every book and vestment in the choir and vestry. Things which were consecrated, and very dear to the Prioress, who had seen them used all her life long, were put down as items in a sale catalogue. Then, in turn, dormitory, refectory, chapter house, kitchen, every single place was visited and its contents inventoried, and the Commissioners questioned every one to make sure that the nuns had not begun to sell things off, since March, for their own profit.

All this took some time. Sometimes neighbours, both gentle and simple, came in and most kindly did they speak of the nuns. On May 12, the Commissioners wrote to the head official of the Court of Augmentations in London—

"Ryght honorable, after all humble recommendacions, theis shalbe to advertyse you [these letters are to tell you] . . . [that the] howse of Catesby we ffounde in verry perfett order, the prioress a sevre, wyse, discrete, and very relygious woman, with IX nunnys under her obedyencye as relygious and devoute . . . as we have . . . seen or belyke shall see. The seid howse standyth in sueche [such] a quarter much to the releff off the Kynges people, and his graces pore subjectes their [there] lykewyse mooche releived, [relieved], as, by the reports of dyvers worshyppfulles nere thereunto adjoynyng [*i.e.* respectable neighbours] as of all other yt ys to us openly declared. . . . Yf yt shoulde please the kynges highnesse to have eny remorse that eny suche

* *The seal of Warden Abbey bore three pears.*

relygous house shall stande,* [*i.e.* shall continue] we thynk his grace cannot appoynt eny house more mete [suitable] . . . than the said house of Catesby."

Edmund Knightley. George Gyffard.
John Lane. Robt. Burgoyn.

George Gifford took control of all the lands and property, but they agreed to wait now until they heard from London.

Now a certain John Onley, who may have been a Northamptonshire man, had gone to London years before, and by now was a rich man. He had a post in the Court of Augmentations. He now came down to Catesby, and one day Prioress Joyce met him prowling about. They spoke, and he said that the King had granted the Priory to him. The Prioress trembled. She went back, and wrote to all her friends. She summoned the nuns, and they talked over ways of raising money to offer to the King. She wrote to Cromwell himself—

"The Queen has moved the King for me. I beg you, in my great sorrow, get the King to grant that the house may stand. . . . Mr. Onley says he has a grant of it."

She offered the King above £1000, and she offered Cromwell her prayers and £66 13*s.* 4*d.* to let the house stand. Cromwell folded up the letter and put it away unanswered. Prioress Joyce did not know two things. The King had grown to hate the very sight of the Queen.† Moreover, he owed Mr. Onley more than £1000. So the Commissioners received sharp orders to go back and finish, and in the middle of June their horses trotted into the courtyard of Catesby again. And then the Priory was filled with the dreary bustling of the final break-up. The nuns were allowed to stay for a time, but it was staying in a house where removal was going on. There was no place where the nuns could get away from the noise and the

* *The Act gave the King power to continue any of the small houses that he thought good.*

† *Queen Anne was beheaded on May* 19, 1536.

wandering strange people. They could not sing service in the church; for people were trampling in and out. There was no place in dormitory or cloister where men were not lugging furniture out; Master Gifford, inventory in hand, moved everywhere. Then the Commissioners held a sale within the Priory.* People came in from all around. Some were eager for bargains, others said they thought anything bought there would bring bad luck. First the silver plate was put up to auction; it included the chalices and patens from the altar. It fetched £29 4*s.* 11*d.* While it was being sold the poorer people gaped about, for they had never been allowed inside the nuns' part of the monastery before. Then came furniture and vestments, and the rich service books. Cattle, too, were driven about the yard and sold. But after a time bidding slackened. In the end about half the possessions of the Priory were left unsold.

Then the nuns had to go. Only the Prioress could claim a pension. She got quite a good one—£20 † a year; such a sum would enable her to keep a servant and live well. We do not know what became of the nuns. They were entitled to "a reward," that is, a little sum of ready money to take into the world. The servants got their last wages; they, too, had to look for a new livelihood. Thomas Banaster, the old steward, went away looking for fresh work.

Now Gifford finished his work. He had to take the lead from the rooves and he had to take down the two bells which had chimed harmoniously together. Men raised ladders to the rooves and unfixed the lead; they lowered the metal to the men below, who had lit huge fires; then they melted it, packed it, and carted it to London. By September this was done. Then Gifford gave up his charge of the lands, for

* *In some places it was held in the cloister, in others in the church.*

† £1 *was worth perhaps* £10 *to* £15 *of our money.*

John Onley had got his grant and was anxious to come and settle there. He brought his carpenters and masons and turned the nave of the church into the body of his new house, and made the buildings around the cloister into his farm-buildings.* He came and lived there ; his son lived there after him, and his descendants too, as undistinguished country gentlemen, until the early eighteenth century. It was no longer possible for the villagers to get all the help that they had had in time of need. The parish church, which had belonged to the Priory, crumbled down and the vicar began to hold services in the chapel at the Manor House. Besides, the villagers had a resident lord now, a sharp-eyed and managing man.

Such scenes were going on all over the country. At Warden, when the monks were gone, and the sale had been held and the lead and bells taken for the King, the Abbey remained in the King's hands. He leased it out to one tenant after another.† Either the Crown officials or one of the tenants made the church into a house, and used up the Abbey buildings as a farm. But even this house has crumbled to pieces by now ; only one buttress of the old church is left. At Biddlesden Priory in Buckinghamshire,‡ the Commissioners and the monks managed to delay the end until 1538 ; and the monks seem to have won the favour of some important men, for they all got pensions apparently. Whether ordinary monks got pensions or not depended on the pleasure of the King.§ One of them, a priest, chose to take a parish living instead of a pension ; he was given charge of the parish of

* *At least, the house looked as though this had been done, judging from a picture made early in the eighteenth century* (*cf.* "*Mottisfant Priory,*" *p.* 209).

† *Cf. also p.* 68.

‡ *See p.* 186.

§ *The Abbot got* £40, *the cellarer* £6, *three monks* £5 6*s.* 8*d. each, a year.*

Thornborough, quite near Biddlesden. He was vicar there in 1552. By that time Biddlesden Priory had been granted to the King's Secretary, Sir Thomas Wriothesley. He neither lived there, nor rebuilt the structure. The vicar of Thornborough must have sorrowed to see the roofless buildings tumbling down. They have been crumbling away ever since.*

In London, at the Augmentations Office, work poured in ; goods—jewels, lead, and bells—arrived from every part, and so did accounts and title deeds ; and, on the other hand, there were grants to be made out and sales † to be kept count of. For the next three or four generations this great market for the sale of lands was open to buyers, both great and small. Mighty nobles, rich merchants, old landed families and petty freeholders seized the chance. The result of this was the re-modelling of country society.‡

But meantime, men had come to understand what the Act of 1536 meant. Out of some 552 houses about 376 had by now disappeared. Yorkshire had lost 53 and Lincolnshire 37. The men of the North were burning with anger. In the thinly peopled northern shires, countryfolk cared little whether the monks were learned or pious or good. They felt the need for abbeys in lonely places, like Shap Abbey upon Shap Fell or Rievaulx on the moors behind Scarborough ; as long as the monks of Durham or Jarrow kept hospitality, and guarded the shrines that the people loved, they did not think hardly of them for diminishing the number of poor in the infirmary, or tending the sick lazily. From September 29, 1536, to the spring of 1537, King Henry was struggling and fighting hard against the rebels who rose in the northern shires in the

* *In* 1712 *a chapel, and the eastern side of the cloister with the chapter house, still stood.*

† *See p.* 65.

‡ *See Chap. III and Chap. IV.*

Pilgrimage of Grace.* The struggle was very severe. Nine great abbeys † fell into Henry's hands because their Abbots were attainted of treason and beheaded for their alleged share in the revolt, and five smaller ones were confiscated ‡ as a punishment for resistance to the King's troops. Apart from these only three or four other houses were surrendered during the year 1537. About 156 large monasteries still remained to serve God in the old way.

From this time the further steps in the Dissolution were carried out in quite a different way, and, probably, were decided upon by Henry for different reasons from those which had led him to attack the lesser houses. Until now he had perhaps hoped to make a reform of the greater monasteries. But now he had found out that he had strong opponents of his whole policy towards the Church among the monks and their supporters. He had also discovered that all the men to whom he had granted monastic lands stood by him and his policy. He saw then that if he continued to make such grants he would bind numbers of men to perpetual support of the Royal Supremacy in the Church, more firmly than oaths could bind them. He decided, therefore, upon the suppression of all abbeys. But he would not dissolve them even with support of Parliament. They must surrender themselves.

Within their walls the monks and nuns saw now that

* *Lincolnshire rose on September* 29, *Yorkshire and Durham about mid-October. The final executions went on into May,* 1537. *It was a real outburst of country gentry and their tenants, partly against enclosures, partly against religious changes in services, partly against the Dissolution of the Monasteries. An excellent account of the revolt is given in Gasquet, "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries."*

† *Kirksted, Barlings, Norton* (*Cheshire*), *Jervaulx, Fountains, Bridlington, Gisboro', Whaley* (*Lancs.*), *Woburn* (*Beds.*).

‡ *Sawley, Hexham, Newminster, Lanercost, St. Agathas, Richmond* (*Yorks.*).

their houses must perish. They must have lamented bitterly over the future of their beautiful churches and all the buildings they knew so well. They had great fears, too, for their own future. Until now, among the smaller houses, only the Abbot or Prior had as a rule received a pension. What were the ordinary brethren to do? Often the monks must have discussed this. There were only two ways. One was to make as much money as they could out of the lands and goods of the house while they still controlled them. This way was chosen by the Prior and monks of Launde Priory, in Leicestershire, in the very heart of the fine Leicestershire sheep pastures. The Prior of Launde had usually kept over 2000 sheep upon the great pastures he or his predecessors had made "where once the town of Whadborough stood." Now a neighbour noticed as he rode along the road between the Prior's hedges, that hardly a score or more white fleeces were in sight. Then the King sent him orders to find out what the Prior of Launde was doing. The gentleman set to work.

"As concernynge the priory of Lawnd, I have caused too [two] honest persons to vewe [view, inspect] the demaynes [lands held by the Lord of a manor himself] of the same, and wheras the seid demaynes with Whatbore [Whadborough] ffelde, were wont and accusteymed to kepe this tyme of the yere too thowsande sheipe or very nere, ther be at thys, scant ffyve hunderde sheipe, of the wiche I suppose . . . hyghe halff of them be not the priores, and wheras the said prior was accusteymed to kepe upon his comynes [commons] in Loddyngton ffeld ffyve hundred sheipe ther is at this daye nor one sheipe. . . . And as concernynge begs [beeves, oxen] all ffate begs, excepte a very ffewe for the howse, be sold, and mych of the stuf of howshold is conveyed away. . . . And as concernyng plate, the prior told me that he hade made it away [*i.e.* sold it] a good whyll agoe, to the intent to have redemyd his house [*i.e.* to have offered the King money to let the house stand] if itt wold have bene, except the juelles and plate of chirche, which I am informyd remayns stylle."

He told, too, how the Prior was trying to get the brethren to grant a very favourable lease of some land to a very near relation of his own. The monks hoped perhaps to get money from the sale of their sheep and goods on which to support

themselves when their house was broken up. Many and many a house, all over England, was thus hastily selling all it could throughout the years 1537–39.

The other way of securing the future was to give up the house voluntarily, and without protest or trouble, and to try and please the Visitors and the King, for if this were done, sometimes very good pensions were granted to all.* During the years 1537–39, house after house surrendered; no further Act ordering dissolution was necessary. Parliament needed only to confirm the surrenders the monks themselves were making. In April, 1539, Parliament enacted that the King should have all monasteries—

"Which . . . sith the fourth day of February [1536] † have been or shall happen to be dissolved, suppressed, renounced, . . . given up, or by any other mean come to the King's Highness."

By the end of the year, 1539, about 150 communities out of the 156, had surrendered.‡ Westminster Abbey was given up on January 16, 1540, by its Abbot and his twenty-four monks, and its income and lands came to the King. Last of all, Waltham Abbey, followed all the rest, in March, 1540.

These surrenders were brought about in different ways. Sometimes the monks were quite willing, sometimes they were not. Sometimes the King's Visitors said there might be good pensions for them, sometimes they threatened them. After the executions of November and December, 1539, no monks dared to resist.

When Cromwell heard that a particular community wished to surrender, he appointed Commissioners to go there. Three

* *This was not always the case. At Furness Abbey the monks all signed the deed of voluntary surrender in April,* 1537. *But the rank and file only got* 40*s. each as a present.*

† *The date of the previous Act, see p.* 198.

‡ *It was in November,* 1539, *that the Abbots of Reading and Glastonbury were executed for treason, and in December,* 1539, *the Abbot of Colchester. Thus their houses were forfeited and dissolved.*

were local gentry, and three were officials of the Augmentations Office. First, in the chapter house, in the presence of all brethren, the Commissioners received the deed of surrender, signed by all the monks from the Abbot downwards. Then they took steps like those taken with the smaller houses. First they made a complete inventory of goods ; often this took many days, in the case of great houses like Gloucester or Westminster ; sometimes they called up a jury of neighbours to help them. Meantime they dismissed the monks. The Abbot and Prior were always pensioned. Ordinary monks usually got about £5 a year ; sometimes, however, they only got a small present in money, or even only received leave to sell their own goods * at the auction. Then the great household received the last wages, and was dismissed—144 servants at Tewkesbury Abbey, 110 at Cirencester Abbey, 70 at Hayles Abbey.

Then came the auction. Vestments were bought by housewives to be cut up into curtains and cushion-covers, and sometimes choir books were bought by tradesmen to tear up for wrappings. Even the woodwork of church and cell were, in some cases, taken up and sold. Meantime the plate was valued and packed and carted away to the Mint ; the bells, the lead sheets from roofs, and the leaden gutters and pipes, were melted and packed and carted away to London. After many days' work of this sort, the bare, ruined choirs were left in the hands of the Augmentations Office.

The fate of the monastic churches varied. Six of them—Westminster, Oxford, Chester, Gloucester, Bristol, Peterborough—were made the cathedral churches of new bishoprics. So much of his first plan the King executed. All the other churches and all the rest of the property remained, for the moment, in his hands. Sometimes the people of a place

* *In some monasteries monks had been allowed to have a few possessions of their own, although this was against the Rule.*

desired the old monastic church, for a parish church. So they subscribed and bought it. Sherborne Abbey church became Sherborne parish church. St. Alban's Abbey church became the church of the townspeople. Most often the church was

FIG. 30.—Mottisfont Priory. The outside of the Nave, transformed into part of the dwelling house. The buttresses still retain much of the original work.

unroofed and left to decay, if it were not pulled down. Sometimes, however, a layman bought the monastery church and all other buildings, or else received them as a royal gift. Then, time and again, he altered the church and other

buildings into a house for himself. Sir William Sandys made the nave of Mottisfont Priory the shell of his new mansion.* At Torre Abbey (Devon) it was the refectory that was recon-

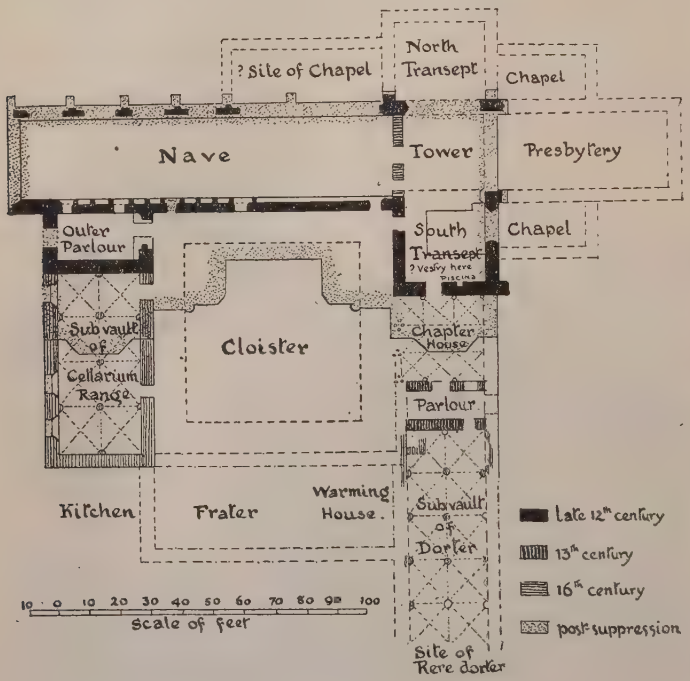


Fig. 30B.—Plan of Mottisfont Priory. Mottisfont was a Priory of Austin Canons, monks who lived under a Rule slightly different from that of St. Benedict. It was founded about 1200, and granted in 1536, at his own urgent request, to Sir William Sandys, the owner of the Vyne, by Henry VIII. The dotted lines show the parts of the monastery which have been pulled down altogether.

structed to form the house, and so it survived. At Cirencester (Glo'ster) Queen Elizabeth granted the crumbling buildings of the late Abbey to her doctor, T. Master. He pulled down

* *See Fig.* 30.

everything completely, except three gateways and a fine, useful stone barn, and built quite a new house.

Whether kept by the Crown or held by private owners, many buildings were simply left to fall to pieces. Some like Tintern and Whitby and Fountains, though in ruins, have resisted time and weather. Others, like Easeby Abbey (Yorks.) and Bacton Abbey (Norf.) show little more now than green mounds and ditches.

The fate of the people who were turned out of them is hard to trace. Some monks took service as parish priests. Those who had pensions, actually received them if they could come to London to get them. But the total number of monks and nuns was not large,* nor, probably, was the total number of poor people supported permanently in monastic infirmaries and hospitals. The largest numbers of people affected at the time must have consisted of the household and outdoor servants, who were suddenly dismissed, and the vagrants and poor who had actually been fed upon the daily leavings. The men and women of the time felt, no doubt, great pity for the monks and nuns, when they saw them go and heard their sad tales. But perhaps they felt as did one man, whose feelings are recorded. At the auction in an Abbey, he and his friends had bought the timber of the church and steeple. Years later, his son asked him whether he had thought well of the monks—

"Yea, for," said he, "I saw no cause to the contrary." "Well, then, how came it to pass you were so ready to destroy and spoil what you thought so well of?" "Might not I as well as others have some profit from the spoil of the Abbey? For I saw all would away, and therefore I did as others did."

Men who had grown up under a general impression of the

* *At Westminster there were* 25 *monks* (*income in* 1535: £3470); *at Gloucester,* 36 *monks* (*income* £1430).

laziness of the monks were not the men to fight for their defence.

Apart from the foundation of the six bishoprics, the King did certainly not use the wide monastic lands for any great public purpose. Nevertheless, the dribbling away of these lands into private hands produced great results. The monks' lands were given or sold to courtiers and rich men. But not to courtiers and rich men only. A wealthy gentleman bought the chief lands and buildings of Sherborne Abbey for nearly £1500. But in the year after the monks left, small sales of lands in Sherborne produced over £520 for the King. The great sales of land gave great opportunities to the poorer freeholders and even to copyholders. It was partly this purchasing of land by small men which led to the marked prosperity of the seventeenth century. But the greatest effect of the Dissolution was not in any material change. It was the immense effect produced upon men's minds by the rejection of anything so old, so familiar, and so reverend, as the monastic life in England, for the sake of the new, national Church under the royal Headship.

Book List

Author.	Title.	Publisher.
Wright, T... ..	Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Monasteries	*Camden Society.*
Savine, A... ..	English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution	*Clarendon Press.*
Fisher, H. A. L. ..	Political History of England, 1485–1547	*Longmans.*
Gasquet, Monsignor A.	Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries	*G. Bell & Sons.*
Pollard, A. F. ..	Henry VIII.	*Longmans & Co.*
Traill, H. B. ..	Social England	*Cassell & Co.*

For particular monasteries, the "Victoria County History" (Cassell & Son) may be consulted.

CHAPTER XI

THE ELIZABETHAN CHURCH SETTLEMENT

"THE 17th day of November (1558) between five and six in the morning died Queen Mary, the 6th year of her Grace's reign, the which Jesu have mercy on her soul! Amen. . . . The same day at afternoon all the churches in London did ring, and at night did make bonfires and set tables in the street and made merry for the new Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary's Sister."

Thus a citizen of London who lived at the time describes the close of one of the most tragic reigns in English history.

The problem before the new Queen and her counsellors was a difficult one. There were at least three parties in the country which must somehow be reconciled if the religious persecutions of the late reign were to end. First, there were those who still adhered to the ancient faith, with its age-old beliefs and ceremonies, and its dependence upon the Pope. Secondly, there werethe extreme Reformers who had gone into exile under Mary and would certainly return as soon as they heard of her death. Thirdly, there were the moderate men who had followed Henry VIII. in his repudiation of Papal authority, and had welcomed the first Prayer Book of Edward VI., with its doctrine of the Real Presence, its close resemblance to ancient forms, its moderate use of ornaments and vestments. Elizabeth's task was to establish a middle way which should gradually win the sympathies of the majority of all these people, while avoiding, if possible, the necessity of persecuting those who remained irreconcilable.

The two great Acts upon which the Church Settlement of the reign is based were passed by Parliament in April, 1559. The Act of Supremacy gave the Queen the title of "Supreme Governor" of the Church. The Act of Uniformity ordered the use in all churches of the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. with one or two alterations. In the first place the words of administration at the Communion were again modified. The sentence from the first Prayer Book which implies the Real Presence was combined with the sentence in the book of 1552 which teaches that the Sacrament merely commemorates the Last Supper. Secondly, the order of 1549 with regard to the use of vestments was restored. A fine of twelve pence a Sunday was imposed on all those who refused to attend service according to the established form. In order to conciliate returning exiles the destruction of stone altars, images, elaborate vestments and ornaments was ordered once more.

On St. Bartholomew's Day, 1559, London streets were full of citizens and country folk in gay attire, come to combine pleasure with business at Smithfield Fair. But the gingerbread stalls and ballad-mongers were soon deserted, for rumour had it that the "papistical idols" of the London churches were to be destroyed that day. The gaping crowd went from church to church, while the parsons and churchwardens, with carpenters and stonemasons, hacked down "the Maries and Johns" from the rood beams. They cut out the other images from their stone niches, bundled up altar cloths, copes, censers * and crosses, Mass books, and sacring bells,† and carried them forth to be burned in the nearest open space "with great wonder." During the autumn, Visitors travelled

* *The vessel containing incense used for "censing" altar, choir and people.*

† *The bell rung at the moment of consecration of the Bread and Wine at the Holy Communion.*

up and down the country performing a like task in other districts.

In a considerable number of churches eager hands and loving hearts had partially restored, under Mary, the rich colouring, glimmering candles, stone altars and costly altar cloths which had been familiar in her father's day. In a few other cases ancient vestments and vessels had been brought out which had been hidden away in the time of Edward VI.

In a few months these were seized upon once more. For the second time the churches stood bare with white-washed walls. The stone altar with its canopy and altar cloth was gone. In its place stood a wooden Communion Table, which could be moved at will into choir or nave. Above the table, where the pyx had held the reserved Sacrament, now hung a board painted with the Ten Commandments. Along the rood beam ran a Scripture text. Over it, instead of the crucifix, hung "a comely crest or vault." Here on Sundays and holy days the parson said Matins and Evensong, and once a month celebrated the Holy Communion, while a sermon was preached once a quarter by the vicar, or some other clergyman who held a preaching licence from the bishop of the diocese.

But the Church as thus established was at first an uninspiring body. The right of presentation to many livings which had once belonged to monasteries was now in the hands of laymen. Sometimes the new patron would appoint one of his own younger sons, irrespective of the fact that he was a mere child; sometimes he would give the benefice to an illiterate craftsman or a disabled servant. In either case the work of the parish was probably done by a curate as ill paid as any of those employed by pluralists before the Reformation. To many people, moreover, religious faith and enthusiasm are matters of early teaching and habit rather than of passionate

personal conviction and experience. Such men were left as ships without anchors. The old familiar forms and ceremonies had been ruthlessly swept away by Edward VI. Their restoration by Mary had been accompanied by a violence which had alienated the kind hearts and easy-going consciences of common men. Devastated buildings and unfamiliar service books could do nothing as yet to rekindle the traditional devoutness of the Middle Ages. Thus it came about that parson and people alike allowed the churches to fall into disrepair. The roof leaked, green damp stains began to show on the white-washed walls. The grass was uncut in the churchyard, the gates hung half off their hinges. Cattle and pigs strayed amongst the gravestones.

In the meantime, within the first month after Queen Elizabeth's accession, news reached Geneva and Zurich and the free towns of Germany that Mary was dead. The English exiles left the studious and orderly homes of Calvinism, where they had pored over the Scriptures in public libraries, and debated questions of ceremonial and doctrine with learned Swiss Reformers. Turning their faces homeward they travelled, day after day, on foot or horseback through the wintry weather. Throughout December and January the boats which touched at Dover discharged their loads of returning exiles, weary with much travel and the winter crossing in heaving sailing ships, but eager for the latest news as to the religious policy of the new Queen.

At first, on their return, they were greeted with favour. Some of them were asked to preach before the Queen at Paul's Cross in Lent. As during the course of the spring and summer the Marian bishops gradually resigned or were deprived, Reformers took their places. Some were made heads of colleges in the universities, and many of the less prominent and learned were appointed to vacant benefices up and down

the country. In the rather austere buildings which had been granted to them for use as churches in their foreign homes, the exiles had used the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. They had abandoned all ornaments, ministering as a rule in

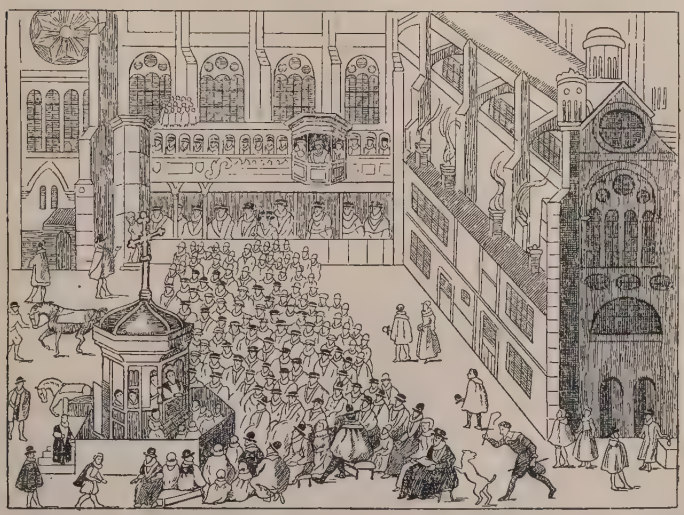


Fig. 31.—Preaching at Paul's Cross (as it appeared in 1620). The Cross stood at the end of the churchyard nearest to Cheapside. It had been there from very early times. It was rebuilt in the way shown in the picture by Bishop Keays of London about 1470. The transept seen here with houses built along it is the North transept of old St. Paul's; running towards the left of the picture is the chancel and west end of the old Cathedral. The King is sitting in the covered gallery, below. From the 15th century, important sermons were preached there by clergymen appointed by the King. Latimer's sermon on the Plough was preached at Paul's Cross.

a plain black gown with open sleeves. The Geneva congregation had gone even further, and substituted a new order for the Edwardian Liturgy, using simply a General Confession, a metrical psalm sung to a plain tune, a sermon, and a concluding prayer for "all estates, especially England." In these

austere and simple forms the exiles had found the spiritual satisfaction which the ancient rites had ceased to give them. They wished to see altars, with their association of miraculous change, removed from the east end of the church; the wooden Communion table, they thought, should stand in the nave where the faithful could gather round to partake of the Lord's Supper. They felt that even such ceremonies as the sign of the cross in baptism or the ring in marriage distracted their minds from direct communion with God, and were apt to lead simple people to imagine that there was some magic virtue in the symbol itself, apart from the spiritual truth symbolised. The use of the cope or even the surplice seemed to them to set apart the clergy as a special caste—mediators between God and man, instead of human ministers of the Word; some of them even abandoned any distinctive dress in the street, and wore hats and cloaks like laymen.

On their return to England the extremists hoped to find a like simplicity established, but they were doomed to disappointment. It is probable that the Queen herself liked a certain amount of ceremonial in worship. The cross was retained in her own chapel, and she once hinted to the Spanish Ambassador that she would like to see it restored elsewhere. Cathedral clergy were expected to wear copes when celebrating the Holy Communion, and the surplice and academic hood were prescribed for all occasions in parish churches. Some of the exiles refused to follow these instructions. Elizabeth and Parker, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, saw, however, that if every man were allowed to follow his conscience in these matters there would soon be such diversity that each congregation would form a church by itself. Without any desire to persecute they accordingly felt bound in the interests of unity to urge the bishops to interfere.

Bishop Grindal of London—a saint to whom outward

forms were indifferent provided that men walked with God—was forced to hold a visitation of his diocese in 1565.

"Some say the service and prayers in the chancel," he reported, "others in the body of the Church, some say the same in a seat made in the Church, some in the pulpit with their faces to the people, some keep precisely to the order of the book, others intermeddle psalms in metre; some say in a surplice, others without a surplice; the Table standeth in the body of the Church in some places, in others . . . in the chancel . . . administration of Communion is done by some with surplice and cap, some with surplice alone, others with none, some with chalice, some with communion cup, others with a common cup; some with unleavened bread, some with leavened, some receive standing, others sitting, some baptize in a font, others in a basin, some sign with the cross, others sign not, some with a square cap, some with a round cap, some with a button cap, some with a hat."

On March 26, 1566, the clergy of London and Southwark were summoned to Lambeth Palace, to be examined on the question of uniformity by the Archbishop and the Bishop of London, as members of the Ecclesiastical Commission which represented the Queen's authority in these matters.

It was a motley company which was ushered in through the Palace gate. One hundred and ten in all appeared; some wore the scholar's gown and tippet, and the square cap prescribed by law, some wore the Genevan gown with its open sleeves, and a round cap, some—the extremists—wore high-crowned hats and short cloaks like laymen. They found themselves in the presence of the Archbishop and Bishop, a few lay Commissioners, and one or two ecclesiastical lawyers. By the Archbishop's side stood a minister who had once been recalcitrant, and had since conformed; he was now dressed, as an example, in the prescribed clerical habit. Parker first of all addressed the assembly, explaining the degree of conformity that was required, and exhorting the clergy gently not to hold out upon so small a matter as dress. Then the Chancellor of the diocese called upon them to set their hands to a declaration as to their willingness to comply. Amid much mourning and protesting over sixty did so; the rest—

including some of the most earnest and learned—refused. They were suspended from their offices, and went out knowing that until they conformed they and their wives and children had legally neither roof to cover them nor income to buy food and clothing.

But these Nonconformists, as they began to be called, already had a large following amongst the people of London. On Easter Day citizens flocked in great numbers to make their Communion. They hoped to see the table standing in the nave so that they might gather round it as to a commemorative feast. In many cases, however, it had been left in the chancel, and the celebrant expected them to receive kneeling before the altar rail. Too often where this was so they came to blows with the minister who turned them forcibly out of church, and locked the doors. In the afternoon at St. Mildred's, Bread Street, a surpliced clergyman came to preach, but the nonconforming minister of the church, and a number of the congregation tried to drag him from the pulpit. A double line of men had to form on either side to protect him to the end of the service.

A little later a secret printing press was set up. Leaflets were printed and strewn about the streets; books appeared attacking "the outward apparel and ministering garments of the Popish church," and were distributed to the congregations at Matins. The writers were discovered and summoned before Parker, who sentenced two of them to go and stay with the Bishop of Winchester for three weeks, in order that he might convince them of the error of their ways. On the day that they were to leave for Winchester a crowd of some two or three hundred women, laden with wine bottles, sugar, spices, gold and silver, collected in the narrow streets leading to London Bridge. Dwellers on the bridge soon heard the shuffling sound of many feet, and the murmur of voices. The

women had met the two travellers, had laden them with their gifts, and were escorting them on their way through Southwark. They accompanied them far along the Winchester road, earnestly exhorting them "to stand fast in the same doctrine."

On the death of Parker in 1575 the saintly and tolerant Bishop Grindal became Archbishop of Canterbury. Eight years later he was succeeded by Whitgift, a very different man. To Whitgift's mind there was still far too little conformity in the Church. He attempted to force all beneficed clergy to declare that the Prayer Book "contained nothing contrary to the Word of God." Under his influence the Commissioners, who from time to time had been appointed to exercise the royal supremacy, became a permanent court—the Court of High Commission. This court might examine men upon such matters of conscience as absence from church, heresy and schism, the publishing of seditious books and pamphlets. Sheriffs were allowed to seize people on suspicion without a writ. No witnesses need be called. The accused had to swear on the Gospel to answer truly any question put to them. If they proved obdurate they might be excommunicated, censured, fined or imprisoned. Under this arbitrary system many of the most earnest Reformers were driven from their benefices. It is said that sixty-four ministers were suspended in Norfolk, sixty in Suffolk, thirty in Sussex, thirty-eight in Essex. They were left without means of support for themselves or their families. Their parishes went unshepherded or were handed over to lax and unlearned men.

The increasing difficulty of worshipping according to their own consciences gradually drove men to meet in secret conventicles. Sometimes these were merely groups of clergymen who came together to discuss the Scriptures, to consult or to advise each other. Sometimes they were gatherings of lay

folk in the house of a minister, for psalm-singing and preaching without the obnoxious dress and ceremonial. Sometimes they were assemblies of Anabaptists, Brownists, or the obscure sect known as the Family of Love. These men had withdrawn altogether from the Church, the Anabaptists because they repudiated the doctrine of infant baptism, the Brownists because they believed in the independence of each congregation from all external interference on the part of bishops, the Family of Love because they proclaimed the end of the rule of law and the coming of the reign of love. In any case they were committing a breach of the Act of Uniformity, and rendering themselves liable to fine or imprisonment. Thus it was that their meetings had to be held with great secrecy, now in a private house, now in a barn or warehouse, sometimes in a Guildhall hired under pretext of a wedding feast, sometimes in a ship or lighter anchored in the Thames. But in spite of every precaution the long arm of the law sooner or later found them out. Sometimes the Sheriff's officer burst in upon the little meeting and haled the leaders before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, sometimes a zealous parishioner complained at the Archdeacon's visitation that his vicar held private prayer-meetings in his own house, sometimes a local justice surprised a little gathering in wood or barn, and bound the ring-leaders over to appear at Quarter Sessions, sometimes the churchwarden, sent round by the rector to track out truants during service time, heard the droning sound of prayer or psalm-singing proceeding from the barn at the back of the village inn.

In scorn men nicknamed these men and women who could find no peace for their consciences within the Church, "Puritans." The term was applied alike to those who sought to please God by wearing sad-coloured clothes and grave faces and eschewing the old pastimes of the countryside, and

to those whom the bishops were rapidly driving into separate Churches by their rigid interpretation of the Act of Uniformity. At first used as a term of abuse, it became eventually the honourable title of the great party which, in the seventeenth century, stood for the principle of liberty in Church and State.

Whitgift's zeal for order soon aroused a great outcry against the government of bishops. Pamphlets appeared from secret presses attacking their power. The most famous and most illusive of the Puritan pamphleteers was "Martin Marprelate." Marprelate is, of course, a fictitious name which explains itself. The series of tracts published under it were probably written by two if not three different men, but their secret was so well kept that scholars to-day are still discussing Martin's identity. The press was first set up at East Molesey in a house borrowed from Mrs. Crane, a lady of strong Puritan sympathies. When spies became too active in the neighbourhood press and type were packed up, and Waldegrave the printer trudged off with his men into Northamptonshire. Here Sir Richard Knightley gave them shelter in the nursery of Fawsley House, and Mr. Jeffs a neighbouring farmer brought the press and types over in one of his waggons, hidden, so tradition says, under a load of turnips. Early in the following spring spies became suspiciously active in Northamptonshire, and Sir Richard's guests departed. For a time the press had to be hidden in an empty farmhouse not far from Daventry. In March a new tract appeared, printed at the White Friars, Coventry, where the printers had found shelter with a certain Mr. Hale. But now the hunt became so hot that Martin and his printer thought it prudent to disappear. The later tracts professed to be written by Martin's sons, and were printed by a certain John Hodgkins "saltpeterman." Like his predecessor Hodgkins was forced to fly from one Puritan

house to another, and ultimately in moving from Warrington to Manchester he lost a few of the metal letters from which he printed. A little child found them and carried them as a great curiosity to its mother. She took them to the neighbouring Justice of the Peace, who recognised the strange objects. No one outside London and the two Universities was allowed to exercise the craft of printer. Consequently the owners of the letters were at once suspected. Hodgkins was seized, imprisoned and subjected to the rack, and Martin and his sons were forced to retire into private life.

Exploits such as these are amongst the glories of Elizabethan Puritanism. The original Martin, unlike some of his contemporaries, was no "precision," looking askance at stage plays, May games, and even such innocent amusements as bowls. He was probably a courtier, and certainly a humourist of no mean power. Shocked by the contrast between the sufferings of the Puritan clergy and the comfortable lives of the bishops who persecuted them, he turned his ready wit to a half humorous, half serious attack on individual bishops and on episcopacy as a whole. While he thus incurred the wrath of the Government, he at the same time roused the suspicion of many of the stricter of his fellow Puritans, who were too strait-laced to joke on so serious a matter.

But as Martin reminded them—

> "Jesting is lawful by circumstances even in the greatest matters. The Lord being the author both of mirth and gravity, is it not lawful in itself, for the truth, to use either of these ways . . . ?"

But even Martin probably sacrificed less and ran fewer risks than the printers who devoted themselves to producing his pamphlets. Waldegrave, the first, was quite early in the proceedings deprived of his printer's licence, and but for his Puritan friends must have left his wife and six children to starve. Hodgkins, as has been seen, suffered imprisonment

and bodily torture for his share in these early struggles for liberty of conscience.

Puritan Nonconformity, however, was not the only difficulty with which Elizabeth and her bishops were faced in their task of building up the Anglican Church. In many country districts men still held to the Roman Catholic faith. In the early days of the reign, when the Visitors were traversing England, destroying or confiscating ornaments and Popish books, rumour ran before them. As the pedlar or ballad-monger brought the news that the Commissioners were only forty miles away, vicar and churchwardens held a hasty meeting in church or church-house. The vestments, ornaments and Mass books were brought out. One parishioner bought the best chasuble * for a nominal sum, another purchased the candlesticks and the sacring bell, another the missals and the censer. When the vicar was summoned to visitation in the neighbouring market town he could truthfully swear that his church possessed nothing but a cope; but the following Sunday, when the Visitors were far away, the parishioners produced the ornaments and books they had bought, and Mass was said as usual.

In 1565 the churches of the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield presented a curious spectacle. In many cases ornaments had disappeared, but the people brought beads to church and their fingers and lips moved busily as they murmured the ancient prayers. The parson with his face to the east used the Anglican Prayer Book, but muttered the English words in a rapid and inaudible voice, so that it was impossible to distinguish what he said from the old Latin Order.

Here and there some of the ancient Holy Days † which had

* *The outer vestment worn by the priest when celebrating Mass.*

† *The Anglican Church of course retained a considerable number of Holy Days, for which special Collects, Epistles, and Gospels were appointed.*

been abolished by law were still observed by the people, shops were shut and workmen refused to go to work; occasionally bearers bringing a corpse to burial would set it down, after the old fashion, before a roadside cross; sometimes the Communion Service was offered as a Requiem Mass for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed. Even in London there were still a few people who heard Mass when they could. In his pleasant house in Hoxton the Portuguese Ambassador purposely kept the doors of his chapel open during service time. One Sunday, two constables, with a warrant from Bishop Grindal, pushed past the guards in the middle of the service. The murmur of the priest's voice was suddenly drowned by their raucous cries ordering out the eight English folk who were kneeling devoutly at their prayers. The rude interruption brought the Portuguese suddenly to their feet. There was an ominous rattle of pikes and daggers. The Ambassador bade the trembling constables show their warrant. The Queen's signature was not there. "You dogs of villains," he exclaimed, "do you think I care for the hand of the Bishop of London?" and he turned them ignominiously out of doors.

For the most part, however, the Roman Catholic population was peaceable and unmolested during the early years of the reign. The poorer folks attended the village church in order to avoid recusancy fines,* but went to Mass in the neighbouring manor house, where a priest lived under the slender disguise of teaching the virginals † to the young ladies, and where Mass books, vestments and portable altar were stowed away with no great show of secrecy, and with the connivance of the neighbouring Justices of the Peace. Some

* *The fines paid by those who refused to attend church, from the Latin word recusare, to refuse.*

† *An old musical instrument, with strings somewhat like a harp.*

of the more influential gentry were not allowed to travel more than a limited number of miles from their own houses, lest they should take means to spread their faith ; a few priests had been caught and imprisoned by officious Justices of Puritan leanings. But there were probably not more than about twenty-five such cases and there seems no evidence to show that large sums were collected as recusancy fines up to the year 1568.

In 1568, however, it became evident that a real political menace lurked under the guise of Romanism. When Mary Queen of Scots embarrassed Elizabeth by flying to England, the Queen summoned the northern Earls to London to take an oath to be faithful to the royal supremacy. Two of them refused to come. A rumour spread rapidly that the people were to rise to dethrone Elizabeth and restore the old religion. The rumour was true. Yeomen and peasants and the lesser gentry of Northumberland were arming themselves with pike, steel cap and morion and putting on the red cross of the crusader. On November 8, 1569, a motley crowd gathered in the great park at Brancepeth to see the Earl of Westmorland raise the standard of rebellion. Six days later the straggling band set out towards Durham. They were led by an old grey-haired knight, who tottered under the weight of a banner bearing the Five Wounds of Christ. Next marched his nine stalwart sons, and after them the shuffling disorderly band of crusaders. As they reached the high ground of Neville's Cross the three great towers of the cathedral stood out grey and massive against the wintry northern sky. The procession surged down the hill, and over the swollen river, up the steep rock, and through the great northern door of the cathedral. Unchecked by the silent majesty of its vast spaces, conscious only of the gashes made by rude hands in the massive pillars when shrine and altar were broken down,

they rushed in, tore up the English Bible, trampled the Prayer Book under their feet, pulled down the new Communion table, and finally fell on their knees while a priest celebrated Mass in the old way. In the meantime a tinker and a tailor—the churchwardens of St. Oswald's—rushed to their own church across the river, seized the English service books and made a bonfire of them by the little dismantled chapel at the bridge end. The same thing happened in various neighbouring parishes. The country was in an uproar. The crusaders marched on in triumph. But the Government was too strong to succumb before so ill-organised a scheme, and by December 17 the rebels were scattered leaderless amid the mists and snows of Hexham Moor.

In the meantime the Roman Church had determined to set its house in order and to make great efforts to recover its lost authority. In 1568 an English college was founded at Douai. Here young Englishmen—many of them of good family—were trained for the Roman priesthood, to be launched eventually upon a mission of conversion in England. The issuing of the papal bull of 1570 absolving Romanists from their obedience to Elizabeth, further complicated the situation. It allowed faithful members of the Roman Church no alternative between disobedience to the Pope and treachery to the Queen. It was for this reason that when the first missionaries began to arrive from Douai in 1574 they were regarded with suspicion by the Government. An elaborate system of spies was organised. They intercepted letters between England and the Continent, by means of which the Government compiled a list of "those whose sons are beyond the seas," and those "who be great friends and ayders of those beyond the seas." An Act of Parliament made it treason to introduce papal bulls into England; it became increasingly dangerous to harbour priests, or possess portable altars or Mass books.

When priests were caught saying Mass and imprisoned their keepers were bribed to pretend to be Papists. Deceived by this ruse the prisoners would entrust their gaolers with letters to their friends. These letters were subsequently delivered to the Government. In this way the Queen's agents sometimes kept up a long, forged correspondence with their victims, until the latter were betrayed into making some incautious admission, or revealing some secret vital to their cause.

It was, however, the arrival of the Jesuit mission in 1580 which finally made the position of Roman Catholics in England well-nigh impossible. The Society of Jesus was a disciplined spiritual army, organised to recover for the Church of Rome those countries which had been torn from her at the Reformation. The conception of the founder, Ignatius Loyola,* a Spanish knight, was that the Church had a spiritual warfare to wage, not so much against sin in the ordinary sense of the word, as against heresy. To emphasise this idea the head of the new Order was called its general, and Europe was mapped out into provinces, in each of which a separate army of Jesuit priests was to struggle against the powers undermining the foundations of the faith. Moreover, the individual member of the host must render the same kind of unquestioning obedience to his superiors that a soldier on active service yields to his officers. The Jesuits took the three monastic vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, but owing to the different task which they had to perform their lives were very different from the lives of monks and friars.

FIG. 32.—A Jesuit.

* *Ignatius Loyala founded the Society of Jesus in* 1534 *and died in* 1556.

The warfare which they had to wage was in the hearts and minds of men. They therefore needed an intimate knowledge of the workings of human thoughts and emotions. In order that they might be able to persuade and control others they had first to learn self-discipline. In this they were initiated during a two years' novitiate which might begin as early as the age of fourteen. During this period the aspirant for admission to the Order led a retired life under the absolute control of the superior appointed to him. He underwent spiritual, mental and physical training, undertaking the humblest tasks of household work and attendance upon the sick. At the close of the two years he must make to his superior a full confession, not only of his sins, but also of his virtues, not only of his failures in duty, but also of his devotions and his penances.

In order to teach pupils, however young, a man must first himself be a scholar. The novice, therefore, having taken his vows, next passed on to college, where he entered upon a five years' course in arts, and subsequently spent five or six years teaching under supervision in one of the free schools attached to all the Jesuit colleges. Here he was trained in the use of new and more attractive methods and books than those which were found in the ordinary schools of the period. He was taught to obtain a hold over the minds of his scholars by a combination of firmness with gentleness.

As he reached the age of twenty-eight or thirty he was admitted to the study of theology—and six years later he might attain the crown of his ambition, ordination to the priesthood. At length, after a training which sometimes extended over a period of thirty years, he was ready for his life's work in the service of the Roman Catholic faith. This meant the abandonment of the secluded life of novice, scholar, or teacher. The Jesuit who had completed his vows must be

a man of the world, suave, courteous, well-informed. He must separate himself even in dress as little as possible from his fellow-men. He must have no fixed home. He must be prepared to live in courts and palaces as confessor to princes, or to undertake the hazardous adventure of maintaining the faith of his persecuted co-religionists in Protestant lands. Disguised in secular clothing, hiding in secret closets behind hollow panels or in chimney breasts, he must be ready to fly by night from manor house to manor house with his portable altar and the few books and vestments he could carry. In the years 1578–79 special colleges were founded at Rheims and Rome for the training of Englishmen, and in 1580 the first Jesuit mission was despatched to England.

It was on April 18 that the little band, fourteen in number, set out from Rome on foot. In the bright spring weather they passed through Bologna, Milan and Turin, and in May crossed the Alps, whose high green meadows were gay with narcissus. From Geneva they followed the course of the Rhone, pouring its turgid waters in a mighty torrent between the vine-covered crags of the Jura, over whose solitary heights eagles wheeled in slow flight. Pressing northward through France they reached St. Omar early in June, and there paused to assume a disguise in which they might hope to reach England undetected. The moving spirits of the party were two men of widely differing types. Parsons was about forty years of age "talle and bige of statur, full-faced and smooth of countenance, his beard thicke of an abrome colour and cut short." He adopted the disguise of a soldier of fortune returning from the Low Countries, in "buff coat laid with gold lace with hat and feathers suited to the same:" Edmund Campion was a young man of some twenty-four years *, of

* *In the early days of the Order when missionaries were urgently needed, their training was in certain cases curtailed.*

age, gentle, charming and of a persuasive eloquence. He assumed the disguise of a jewel merchant. The little party now set off on the last perilous stage of the journey in five detachments. The Government in England, fully convinced that the mission was political, had obtained by means of spies and intercepted letters, full particulars of the names and appearance of the Jesuits. Searchers were on the look-out at Dover. Every one who landed was subject to close scrutiny by the Mayor, but by dint of coolness and daring the missionaries escaped detection.

Then began a period of great activity. Disguised now as lawyers, now as merchants, now as soldiers, now as ministers, the Jesuits went from one Roman Catholic house to another, saying Mass, administering the sacraments, counselling, teaching and consoling. They set up a secret press in a house at East Ham, five miles outside London. The printer's journeymen were disguised as young gallants, and rode spirited horses. They issued books attacking the Anglican Church. These as they came forth from the press, were distributed by fifties. They were left in the houses of Protestant merchants, deposited on the bookstalls in the streets, even smuggled into the royal palace and placed in conspicuous positions there. So excellent were the disguises of the Jesuits, so illusive their movements, that the spies could not lay hands on them. Even when Parsons walked into an inn, where his portrait was displayed with a proclamation of the reward placed on his head, he managed to escape detection by scolding his host roundly for harbouring the picture of so pestilential a villain.

The Government, more convinced than ever that the mission was political, and with evidence at hand that plots existed against the life of the Queen, persuaded Parliament in 1581 to pass more stringent penal laws. The fine for

recusancy was raised to £200 a month; any one saying Mass was liable to a fine of two hundred marks and a year's imprisonment, and any one being present at Mass to a fine of one hundred marks and a like period of imprisonment. Any one employing a recusant schoolmaster must pay £10. Seeking to withdraw men's allegiance from the established religion was made treason, punishable by death.

A furious hunt for Jesuit priests was inaugurated. Justices of the Peace, accompanied by royal pursuivants from London, broke into the houses of their Roman Catholic neighbours surprising them at Mass. In the course of a year the prisons became so full of Catholic gentlemen that other prisoners for religion had to be set free. Peasants, who had been taught by the Jesuits that outward conformity was no longer permissible, were ruined by the recusancy fines. Haled at intervals before the justices at Quarter Sessions they saw their slender stock of savings disappear. When their money was gone they must needs give their goods—gradually they parted with porridge pots, and cooking utensils, their best clothes and the piece of cloth which had been bought with such pride out of a summer's savings to make winter coats for the children; at length their very cows had to go, so that they had not even milk for their babies. At the same time their richer neighbours were being ruined on a larger scale. The Government played at cat and mouse with its victims, imprisoning them for enormous periods, letting them out at intervals to transact necessary business, exacting great sums as bail. Meantime, if the prisoners refused to attend Protestant prayers in prison, the recusancy fines mounted by leaps and bounds, until in 1592 one gentleman owed £1690 16*s.* 1¼*d.*, and in the next few years was obliged to part with all his property, saving only his dwelling house and a few acres of land surrounding it. Priests were, however, the favourite quarry of

the pursuivants, and they and those who harboured them went through harrowing adventures. Twice Father Blount, who made his headquarters in the house of Mr. Darell, of Scotney, in Sussex, was nearly captured. Just before Christmas, Justices of the Peace and a pursuivant received information from a discharged retainer. They surrounded the house at dead of night, and at an early hour in the morning demanded entrance. Seizing a passing maidservant they made her call her master.

"Mistress," cried the girl from the foot of the dark staircase, "here is Sir George Rivers, and such a Justice, and such a Justice come to speak with you."

This was sufficient warning. Before she appeared before the justices Madam Darell found means to send a message to the priest and his servant. Roused suddenly from their slumbers they had only just time to seize a cassock, the Mass books, and the other church ornaments, and make for the place of refuge—a hole in the thickness of the wall of a little stone turret in the courtyard. Every night for four or five nights the justices went round the house with carpenters and bricklayers, sounding the walls. By day a strict watch was kept, while Mrs. Darell and her children were shut up in the gate-house. At length, one day, the courageous lady found means to get out, and going unseen to Father Blount's hiding-place, found the girdle of his cassock hanging out from the concealing stone. She cut off as much as she could, but still it showed. "Pull in the string," she cried. At that fatal moment the searchers arrived in the courtyard. In spite of a clever excuse their suspicions were roused. The fugitives, crouching behind the stone which closed the opening, heard the sound of hammers growing closer and closer, and saw candle-light begin to glimmer through the chinks. They set their backs to the stone, but it gave little by little, and the searchers

knew that they had found the place. A torrential downpour of rain determined them to leave the final capture until daybreak. They went off to drink in the hall, leaving a single watchman, who must have been either incompetent or a secret friend to the priest. No sooner were their pursuers gone than the hunted pair decided on a desperate venture. They emerged from their hiding-place, eluded the watchman, hid the books and ornaments in the grass and scaled two ten-foot walls. Father Blount leapt down into the dark waters of the moat, and swam the eighty feet which separated him from open country. In the meantime his servant burst into the hall, draggled with rain, and raised a cry of "Thieves in the stable!" The justices had gone to bed. Their drink-sodden servants sprang to their feet and lurched towards the stables. In the confusion Father Blount's man made his escape and joined his master in a neighbouring cottage.

Those who were less fortunate, or less daring, or who fell a prey to spies, were too often subjected to the rack, in order to extort confession, and finally put to an ignominious and horrible death.

It must be remembered, in judging the action of the Government in this respect, that in some instances they had definite proof that the Jesuits were plotting against the life of the Queen, and that those who suffered death suffered in every case, not on account of their faith, but on account of real or supposed treason. That innocent people, who only wished to worship according to their consciences, nevertheless underwent grievous imprisonment and impoverishment, was less the fault of the Government than of the Pope and his advisers who by the Bull of 1570 had made loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church incompatible with loyalty to the Queen.

In the meantime there was growing up in the little Grammar Schools and the ancient Universities of England a generation of lads nurtured from their earliest years in the reconciling spirit of the Elizabethan Middle Way. These boys had practically never heard any language in church but the sonorous English of Cranmer's Prayer Book, had never known any ornaments or ceremonies other than

Fig. 33.—Richard Hooker.

those used under the Act of Uniformity of 1558. Of such was Richard Hooker, born in the city of Exeter of humble parents, about the year 1554, and educated at the Grammar School there.

Richard's "quick apprehension and sweet serene quietness of nature" won for him the affection of his schoolmaster. Through his means the boy's parts were brought to the knowledge of Bishop Jewel, of Salisbury, and in 1567, when he was

not yet fourteen years old, he was sent to Oxford through the good Bishop's influence. His biographer, old Isaac Walton, describing him a few years later, says :*—

"Mr. Hooker was now in the nineteenth year of his age ; had spent five in the University ; and had attained unto a perfection in all learned languages. . . . So that by these added to his great reason and his restless industry . . . he did not only know more of causes and effects ; but what he knew, he knew better than other men. . . . And for his behaviour, amongst other testimonies, this still remains of him, that in four years he was but twice absent from the Chapel prayers † ; and that his behaviour there was such, as shewed an awful reverence of that God which he then worshipped and prayed to. . . . This was his behaviour towards God ; and for that to man, it is observable that he was never known to be angry or passionate."

At Oxford, Hooker studied philosophy and law, but devoted himself above all to the Scriptures. He would often say—

"God abhors confusion as contrary to His nature."

He believed, in fact, that he found in the Bible that spirit of tolerance under the law which was the ideal of Archbishops Parker and Grindal. About the year 1581 he was ordained priest. In 1584 he married and left the studious peace of the university for a country parsonage in Buckinghamshire. Here his studies were constantly interrupted, for part of his income as parson was derived from a little farm, and as he had only one servant he was often obliged to tend the sheep, and even at times to rock the cradle, while Mrs. Hooker and the man were busy about the house. In 1585, however, the influence of friends procured for him the position of Master of the Temple, the headquarters of the lawyers in London. Here he found himself in the midst of an atmosphere of

* *Walton was not contemporary with Hooker, but was intimate with men who had been his pupils and friends.*

† *That is the Chapel of his College, where the Anglican Liturgy was of course used.*

controversy. Puritan pamphlets on the one hand and the hunt for disguised Jesuits on the other, kept men's passion at fever heat. Hooker realised that his ideal of order and charity was in danger of being submerged in the confusion which he believed that God abhorred. He entered into a long controversy with those who were attacking the rule of bishops. Isaac Walton calls it—

> "A book war against the Nonconformists . . . maintained not as against an enemy but with the spirit of meekness and reason."

The atmosphere of contention, however, was uncongenial to Hooker. After a few years he retired once more to a country living, at first near Salisbury, and subsequently at Bishop's Bourne in Kent. Here he devoted his great mental gifts to writing his "Eight Books of the Law of Ecclesiastical Polity," a serene and lofty argument in favour of authority and order in the Church.

Walton gives a beautiful picture of the closing years of Hooker's life at Bishop's Bourne. The village lay a few miles off the high road to Dover. Travellers, attracted by the reputation of its parson for learning and gentleness, so unlike the careless selfishness of many of the clergy of the day, often turned aside to visit him. A little, shy, stooping man, plain of face, dressed in a shabby cassock, he spent his time between study in his closet, prayer and meditation in the church, and visiting among his parishioners. Such was his gentle courtesy that he and his parish clerk generally spoke to each other hat in hand. He never failed to visit and comfort the sick and dying; on leaving the house he would bless every member of the family by name. Each year at Rogation time he and his parishioners walked, after the ancient custom, round the bounds of the parish in procession. At such times he was always ready with "some loving and facetious observations" for the lads and young people in his company. Above all

every Ember week * he would beseech his flock to fast and double their devotion, praying God to grant the Church the blessing of a learned and pious clergy. For said he—

"The life of a pious clergyman is visible rhetoric."

Lancelot Andrewes, born in 1555, was not unlike Hooker in spirit. He became Dean of Westminster and subsequently in

Fig. 34.—Lancelot Andrewes.

turn Bishop of Chichester, Ely and Winchester. George Herbert, whom he befriended as a boy at Westminster School, speaks with devotion of his "Whiteness of Soul." A beautiful book of his private devotions reveals his familiarity with the Bible and with those ancient service books which are the lineal ancestors of the Anglican Prayer Book.

* *Ember days are the days on which Church people are specially bound to pray for the clergy and those about to be ordained. These days are the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays following the first Sunday in Lent, Whitsunday, September 14th and December 13th.*

Hooker and Andrewes were the forerunners of a long line of mystics such as Thomas Traherne and William Law, and of scholars such as Jeremy Taylor or Bishop Cosin of Durham, whose lives have from time to time lit up the pleasant country rectories and quiet cathedral precincts of the post-Reformation Church. Such men were devoted to the Common Prayer Book, as drawn up under Edward VI., and loyal to the government of the Church by bishops. Some combined scholarship with toleration, others personal devoutness with pastoral care. Their example set a high tradition of learning and piety before the Anglican priesthood. Their loyalty to established order found an echo in the conservative hearts of Englishmen. Thus very gradually through the late sixteenth, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Elizabethan Middle Way won to itself the affectionate devotion of moderate men of many shades of opinion, and built up a tradition of orderly dignity of its own.

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